

*The Chicago Jewish*

# FORUM

**A National Quarterly**



## Articles

Non-Discrimination and the Federal Government ★ Notes on the Hebrew Language ★ Jewish Religion in Russia ★ Recent German Military Writing. Waldo Frank as a Jewish Writer ★ Mesod, the Dyer of Barkaz ★ The Black Jews of Harlem ★ Immigration, Life Blood of Israel.

**ART**

**POETRY**

**BOOK REVIEWS**

## Contributors

Maxwell Abbell ★ William Blitner ★ Werner Cohn ★ Gideon Dean ★ Moshe Dlugznowsky ★ Otto Eisenschiml ★ Gabriel Gerth ★ Pauline C. Grossman ★ Louise Hajek ★ Martin Hall ★ Harold Helfetz. Richard G. Hirsch ★ Leonard L. Leon ★ E. M. Lillen ★ Charles A. Madison ★ Frank Melsner ★ Murray Polner ★ Ruth Nickerson ★ Harold U. Ribalow ★ Moses Rischin ★ Harry Roskolenko ★ Arnold Sherman ★ Maurice M. Shudofsky ★ Surindar Suri.

**VOLUME 15, NUMBER 3**

**SPRING, 1957**

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*In forthcoming issues of*

## THE CHICAGO JEWISH FORUM



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The architecture of the modern synagogue and the artistic treatment of religious themes in the arrangement of the interior.

# THE CHICAGO JEWISH FORUM

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# Non-Discrimination and the Federal Government\*

By MAXWELL ABBELL

I WAS HAPPY to accept your kind invitation to address you concerning the activities of the President's Committee on Government Employment Policy because I, too, as a steadfast member of a religious minority have, though to perhaps a lesser degree, suffered from the bigotry and discrimination which the Negro in America has had to bear. I, too, have had positions withdrawn after my religion was ascertained, been denied service in certain restaurants, been prohibited from joining certain social or country clubs, and found it useless to try to visit certain resorts. My personal experiences thus to some degree parallel those of the Negro, so that I can feel subjectively and not merely objectively the hurt and the pain borne by those who are the victims of discrimination.

I accepted appointment as Chairman of this Committee because I was convinced that the President was in earnest in seeking to root out all discrimination in Federal employment. In his letter of appointment to me the President wrote:

It is my sincere belief that there is no place in Federal employment for discrimination of any kind. It is my intention in establishing the Committee, on which you have accepted membership, to make sure to the best of my ability that no discrimination does exist in the employment practices of the Federal Government. Should discriminatory practices be found it is my desire that they be promptly corrected.

In my letter of acceptance I wrote to the President:

Your belief that there is no place in Federal employment for discrimination concurs with the ethics of the Bible, on which I have been nurtured and which has been the basis of my lifelong practice. Not only in Federal employment but in no other

sphere of life should there be place for discrimination of any kind. Your intention in establishing the committee will be my guide as its Chairman and your desire that discriminatory practice, if and where found, be promptly corrected will motivate the Committee in its policy.

I should like to point out two features of this Committee which were not true of the preceding Fair Employment Board appointed in 1948:

First, the Committee is on the Presidential level and reports to the President directly; second, three of the five members of the Committee are themselves members of minority groups—its Vice-Chairman, Archibald J. Carey, a Negro, minister, attorney, and former delegate to the United Nations; J. Ernest Wilkins, also a Negro, the Assistant Secretary of Labor and President of the Judicial Council of the Methodist Church, the highest position a layman can hold in that religious body; and myself, a Jew. The composition of this Committee is proof in itself that it was not a mere sham and facade but reflected an earnest, sincere and deep desire on the part of the President to ferret out discrimination in government employment.

I should like briefly to outline the activities of the Committee and then to discuss its relationship to the main subject of this conference.

The Committee was established by Executive Order No. 10590 on January 18, 1955. It held its first meeting on March 18, 1955 and its thirty-third meeting on June 26, 1956. It really has functioned only for about a year, since the first few months were devoted to preparing regulations and organizing procedures. We have functioned along the following lines:

1. As a review board to any applicant for

\* An Address by Maxwell Abbell, former chairman, President's Committee on Government Employment Policy, delivered at the National Conference of the Urban League, Cincinnati, Ohio, September 4, 1956.

government employment or to any government employee who believes that he or she has been discriminated against because of race, religion, color or country of national origin. Every case reviewed has been given extremely careful consideration.

2. Educational activities.

We have issued a number of memorandums and pamphlets for use by

- (a) Employees and applicants for Federal employment, emphasizing our availability to review complaints of discrimination;
- (b) Government Employment Policy Officers, describing our procedures and outlining procedures for better enforcing the President's policy of non-discrimination;
- (c) Supervisors, discussing methods of eliminating supposed or actual grievances, how to deal with the problem of discrimination, etc.;
- (d) The public at large, describing the Committee, its purpose and its readiness to assist in every way possible in eliminating discrimination;
- (e) Educational institutions, particularly Negro institutions, explaining the need for various skills in government employment and urging them to arrange their courses so as to provide such skills;
- (f) Voluntary agencies, informing them of the Committee's procedures and policies, requesting their cooperation in bringing evidence of discrimination to its attention and seeking their cooperation in effectuating and implementing the non-discrimination policy.

3. To promote our program we have held a number of area conferences in Charleston, West Virginia, Baltimore and Washington; and have gone into the heart of the South and carried this program to Atlanta, New Orleans and Dallas. Here we met with deputy Employment Policy Officers and heads of Federal agencies located in the particular areas. At each

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conference the problems encountered in implementing the non-discrimination policy in Federal employment were explored, full discussion was invited, and those present were informed fully of the attitude of the President and of the Committee and given information, suggestions and advice as to how they could implement it. We are about to hold a series of such conferences in Louisville, Memphis and St. Louis.

In addition, a full day's conference has been held in Washington with top representatives from national private agencies interested in the field of human relations and attended by about 70 persons, including three from your organization. Mr. Moss, of the Urban League, made an excellent presentation. This gathering surveyed the problem of discrimination in Federal employment, probed all aspects of the situation, and discussed ways and means of further advancing its solution. The help and cooperation of the private agencies working with the various minority groups were sought by the Committee.

4. The Committee is engaged in a survey of Negro employment in Federal agencies in five major communities in the country, namely, Washington, St. Louis, Chicago, Los Angeles and Mobile, Alabama—all located in areas of large Negro populations and of large numbers of Federal employees. It is almost unbelievable that, although there is no lack of evidence of discrimination in Federal employment, there are no actual statistics on the subject. No such survey has ever been made. If our Committee should do nothing else, it will reveal the true state of affairs at a given date.

Finally, the members of our Committee and its Executive Director have addressed groups such as yours on the non-discrimination policy in order to inform as many interested persons as possible concerning it and to seek the cooperation of every group in the community in the elimination of discrimination.

So much for what the Committee is doing. Now may I comment on the various activities of the Committee and relate them to the subject of your conference.

I have already noted the personnel of our Committee and the fact that three out of five members represent minority groups, including two of the most respected Negroes in the country. The very existence of the Committee, available to review complaints and appeals, has an immensely salutary effect all the way down the line. We are like a Supreme Court in the field of discrimination in Federal employment. Every employee or applicant knows or should know that in the last resort he or she may appeal to us. So do the supervisors and other personnel dealing with employee hiring and promotion; they are therefore less prone, at least openly and overtly, to engage in discriminatory practices. There are many subtle ways in which discrimination may be practiced, but the existence of an avenue of appeal is a powerful deterrent. It has been suggested to us that we ought to limit the type of case we review and not accept frivolous or obviously non-meritorious complaints. The Committee, however, believes that there must be a completely unrestricted avenue open to everyone in the Federal service and that the extra time spent on unwarranted appeals is helpful in instilling in every Federal employee a feeling of confidence that his rights will be safeguarded.

Our educational efforts, we believe, are even more important than our hearing of cases. We have been astonished at the lack of knowledge of even the existence of the Committee on the part not only of governmental officials and supervisors, even including some Employment Policy Officers designated to deal with this problem, but also of the general public, educational institutions, and voluntary private agencies. Supervisory training programs are conducted in almost every branch of the Federal government and the non-discrimination policy should be a part of every supervisor's training. It is becoming increasingly so under stimulation from our Committee. We in-

tend to increase the emphasis upon this phase of our activity.

We have found in some Southern Negro communities a lack of adequate training facilities for Federal employment and no disposition on the part of Negroes to equip themselves for Federal employment in white-collar jobs. This stems from a general feeling that the situation is hopeless and that they could not get appointed or, if appointed, promoted in the Federal service in such positions; so why try to enter this field? One can understand their discouragement, but they must be informed of the tremendous change that has taken place in the last few years and of the new opportunities that have been opened up for them.

The Committee has found instances of what appeared to be a pattern of discrimination in certain agencies or communities which, on closer analysis, was not so at all. The failure of Negroes to be employed in certain agencies, in certain communities and on certain levels resulted from the fact that there were no qualified Negroes available for such positions. To this audience I need not emphasize the variation in educational standards in different parts of the country, with the Negro schools far below the standard of the white schools in the same communities. In one instance we were informed that in a country-wide civil service commission examination at the college level, not one Negro from half a dozen colleges in the South was qualified. There are not enough Negroes attending high school in the South, and of those who do attend an unusually large proportion do not graduate. Of those few who do, an exceedingly small number go on to college. This is somewhat like the old problem of the hen and the egg. A past history of discriminatory practices has discouraged many Negroes from trying to qualify for positions that formerly were not open to them, and now that they are being opened, the qualified applicants often are not available. We have noted improved situations in this respect, however, in scattered southern communities.

The foregoing comments explain the ex-

tensive current migration of Negroes to the North, where even a poor Negro family can make educational opportunities available to its children which a well-to-do Negro family in the South could not provide.

In the educational field standards cannot be raised overnight, but as they are improved and as Negro community attitudes are changed so as to encourage more Negroes to attain skills and higher education, the community climate will gradually be changed so as to encourage a greater and greater proportion to make use of their potential abilities. Much can be done by private agencies in this field and especially by the presently existing Negro educational institutions. The effect of complete integration of schools throughout the South, when and as it comes, may be seen from the upgrading of Negro skills and educational attainments in Northern communities during the past few years.

Voluntary agencies such as the Urban League can do much in this field, and have done much. Negro leadership—non-political—is vitally important in this sphere. Our Committee is ready to cooperate with such agencies not only in bringing cases of discrimination to the fore, but in encouraging qualified Negroes to apply for positions in Federal employment, in agencies and in fields where they have not hitherto sought or found employment. It is the belief of the President's Committee that in the field of education lies the greatest opportunity for advancement of the Negro in future economic and employment opportunities, not only in the Federal government but in private and other public employment as well.

The work of the Committee has already had a substantial effect on the economic opportunities for the Negro throughout the country. Even though total Federal employment numbers only about 2,250,000, there are, in addition to Federal employees, close to 5,000,000 other public employees, as follows:

State .....	1,250,000
County .....	600,000
City .....	1,450,000

Independent school  
districts and other  
similar sub-divisions.....1,460,000

Except perhaps in a few states in the deep South, the non-discrimination policy of the Federal government influences most other public agencies. In some cases these other agencies are ahead of the Federal Government and in some they lag slightly behind, but all are directly or indirectly influenced by Federal policy in the competition for employees and in the example which is set.

In addition, the non-discrimination policy in Federal Government is vitally necessary to make effective the work of the President's Committee on Government Contracts. In a number of cases, when the Government Contracts Committee approached private concerns working on government contracts, requesting elimination of discrimination, they were told that the government ought first to clean its own house and eliminate discrimination among its own employees in that area before it asked private employers to do so. Once discrimination has been eliminated in Federal government employment in an area, this excuse is no longer available to the private employers; in addition, the example set becomes an effective argument with unions and employers as to the possibility of eliminating discrimination by government contractors.

It is important to note that 2,250,000 Federal government employees, 5,000,000 other public employees, and an estimated 7,000,000 employees in private concerns working on government contracts total over 14,250,000 or about 22% of all the gainfully employed in the United States. If those engaged in agriculture are eliminated, about one-seventh of the gainfully employed, then the total number of workers affected directly or indirectly by the activities of our Committee is about 25% of the total industrial labor force—a very strong and effective asset to this all-out drive for complete elimination of discrimination in employment. Professor Eli Ginzburg has demonstrated in his recently published work, "The Negro Potential," that the progress made on all fronts



by the Negro in the fifteen years from 1935 to 1950 has exceeded that made in all the years since Negroes were first settled in the United States. This progress has laid the foundation for accelerated efforts in the immediate future toward the achievement of the Committee's goal.

For this progress to be made, certain barriers must be eliminated. The Church has recently begun to take aggressive action against discrimination and segregation. Many trade unions which formerly restricted their membership to white persons only have, in recent years, changed this policy, though here much remains to be accomplished. In housing and in education, likewise, much progress has been made under the impetus of Supreme Court decisions.

The advance of the Negro has thus been accelerating in recent years on all fronts. The problem is interrelated. As desegregation takes place in housing, so that the Negro can live in better surroundings; as it takes place in education, so that more and better educational opportunities are afforded the Negro; as it takes place in churches, so that whites and Negroes can worship together; and as it takes place in trade unions so that white and Negro co-workers can have the equal protection of the trade union movement—as desegregation takes place in all these, the entire environment of the Negro at home and in his community, as well as his relation vis-a-vis with the white person and the white community, will progressively change for the better. Negroes will not see themselves in a dead-end with no outlet for the ambitions or the abilities they may possess and thus will strive to better themselves economically and will encourage their children to acquire a better education, thus hastening the movement towards equality in every respect.

America can no longer afford the luxury of first- and second-class citizenship for a number of reasons.

First, in our relationships to other nations we must practice what we preach and profess. About 80% of the world's population

are colored and they regard our professions of friendship with suspicion and doubt our professions of democracy when they see the Negro discriminated against in America.

Second, discrimination results in a tremendous loss of manpower—in fact, it was this effect of discrimination which first led to the FEPC orders at the beginning of World War II. In our struggle against Communism we must use all manpower available. Discrimination lessens our manpower potential.

Third, economically we are engaged in a cold war with the Soviet-dominated countries. It has been estimated that discrimination results in an economic loss of over twelve billion dollars a year, arising from the fact that the skills of members of discriminated groups are not fully utilized in the national economy.

And finally, from the point of view of the spiritual base of our civilization, as a matter of ethics, morality and religion, how can we afford to profess belief in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man when we demonstrate this belief only in our attendance at church services and reject it in our day-to-day living? As long as American practice does not conform with the noblest teachings of religion in respect to the equal dignity of all men, created in the image of God, we make a mockery of our religious faiths.

Fortunately, all signs point to the fact that more and more persons, whether for one reason or another or for all the reasons stated, are coming to realize that discrimination and segregation are luxuries that America can no longer afford, and that they debase the moral and spiritual stature of our civilization. In this lies the hope for the future when every American, regardless of race, creed, color or country of national origin, will be treated solely on the basis of his own character, his fitness and his merit.

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*... None can love liberty but good men;  
the rest love not liberty but license ...*

JOHN MILTON



# Notes on the Hebrew Language

By MAURICE M. SHUDOFSKY

THERE is a small but vocal group of misguided Jewish educators who have been urging us to substitute something they call "content" for Hebrew. For purposes of classification we might call these gentlemen "minimalists." One of their spokesmen, a rabbi from the middle west, recently taxed an audience of Hebrew teachers for persisting "in our attempts to befuddle the children with the complexities of a cumbersome language." The rabbi then proceeded to deliver himself of this astounding pronunciamento: "We have tripped over ourselves in the misguided pursuit of teaching Hebrew to our children, for in this way we not only complicate the learning process for them but block off as well many valuable areas of Jewish content. . . . The emphasis on language rather than on content lies at the seat [sic!] of the debacle . . ."

The French have a pithy saying; Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose (the more things change, the more they remain the same). I can well imagine a similar pedagogic conclave in Alexandria some two millenia ago in which the Alexandrian Jewish minimalists propounded and compounded the same folly. The rabbi quoted above insisted that emphasizing Hebrew "is out of touch with the realities of the American situation." Substitute "Alexandrian" for "American" and the pattern becomes agonizingly clear. There was a rich and large Jewry in Greek Alexandria in those days. They must have had many a counterpart of the middle-western rabbi, counselling: "Let us adopt Greek, the language of our Alexandrian situation, and let us translate the Bible into the language we all know, and use it instead of the Hebrew original which is so difficult for our children and for us." And so the Septuagint, the Greek

translation of the Bible, came into being. It is a triumph of scholarship, a significant learned work; but at the same time this translation marked the beginning of the end of Alexandrian Jewry. For as the Hebrew language declined there, Jewishness declined along with it, so that the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren of the translators read the Bible neither in the Greek nor in the original. With the crumbling of Hebrew, the cement of Jewish living through the ages, the floodgates of assimilation were opened. The Alexandrian Jews became Greeks. The Sages of Israel understood aright the process of Jewish disintegration which sets in when Hebrew is neglected. "The day when the Bible was translated into Greek," they said, "was as iniquitous as the day the Hebrews made the golden calf."

Is history repeating itself in America today with respect to Hebrew and the survival of a vital, viable Judaism? We have our false prophets who preach the relaxation of the hold that this tongue has had on creative Judaism from the dawn of our peoplehood. These minimalists seek to dehydrate Jewish education by removing Hebrew from its position of centrality and by substituting something vague and gelatinous like "content" and "emotive appeals." One thing is plain as a pikestaff, after we have removed the filmy gobbledegook: that way lies the deglutinization of Jewish life in this, the largest Jewry in the world. Actually, there is no substitute for the Hebrew language in meaningful Jewish living, for like the Torah which is couched in that tongue, "it is our life and the length of our days." When the English Bible replaced the original and when most of our prayers are uttered in English, we will then be on the road the Alexandrian Jews

took two thousand years ago. The object lesson is clear: Hebrew, our ethno-cultural transmission belt, must be in good repair to insure survival and growth.

Genuine Jewish leaders of past and present have always reminded us that Hebrew is the litmus paper of Jewish living, testing in all ages whether a specific Jewry is destined for life or death. Henrietta Szold, of blessed memory, phrased it pithily: "As there is but one God, so there is but one Judaism, and that Judaism has but one language—Hebrew." The late Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom, Joseph Hertz, put it thus: "Hebrew is the language of languages. It is the key to all of Israel's spiritual treasures and the medium of Israel's message to mankind. No other language, therefore, whether living or dead, has had such a vast span of influence. It is the most important of human tongues, the Sacred Tongue, *Le-shon Hakodesh*."

Just as the Jewish experience on this planet is unique in recorded history, so also is its sacred tongue, Hebrew. Bialik the nonpareil once said: "To study a civilization in translation is like kissing a bride through a veil." This graphic simile is especially applicable to the religious civilization we call Judaism. For three millenia and more the triumphs of Jewish life, together with its profoundest insights, its noblest visions, and its loftiest dreams—all of these found their matchless expression in and through Hebrew. Even when the Jew in the various lands of the Diaspora used the language of the country in which he was sojourning—Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, German, and countless others—Hebrew continued in prayer and study and writing as the hyphen to his past, present, and future. It is noteworthy that we have used Aramaic, Persian, Arabic, Spanish, and German for creative purposes. These languages became so thoroughly sown with Hebrew words, idioms, and forms that they bourgeoned eventually into Jewish tongues; hence Judeo-Aramaic, Judeo-Arabic, Ladino, Yiddish, etc. But Hebrew never relinquished its primal place in the Jewish scheme. It never ceased being

the fixed star in the constellation of survivalist Jewish values.

It is a truism today that a language is more than a medium for labeling things or concepts. It certainly has its important role in naming objects; but in addition, a language transmits sentiments, feelings, pastel linguistic shadings. A language by dint of being the medium of a certain social group assumes a group personality which is untransferable to another group's language. This is essentially what Bialik meant in the dictum quoted above. In a language matter and manner are inextricably intertwined; on the highest level what one says in a language and how one says it constitutes an indissoluble union that no one should try to put asunder. For example, concepts like *Torah*, *D'veykuth*, and *Kavanah*—to mention only a few—defy translation; at best these and innumerable others are capable only of paraphrase, mainly because these terms cannot be Anglicized. They have no English equivalents; the English mind simply did not concern itself with such spiritual ideas. Contrariwise, the God-intoxicated Hebrews were obsessed with such spiritual concepts, expressing these world-moving obsessions in a Hebrew fashioned for this purpose. In order not to be charged with filio-pietism I hasten to add that the English genius in turn has created concepts and ideas which are practically untransferable to Hebrew, ancient or modern.

A case could even be made out for the contention that the translation of the *Bible* into Greek was instrumental in loosing the Christian sect from its Jewish moorings. In the Greek version the original Hebrew words and ideas acquired connotations which had not been intended in the original. The result was the suggestion of views and ideas foreign to Judaism. A good example of this process is the rendering of the Hebrew word *almah*, "a young woman" (Isaiah 7:14), into the Greek as "virgin." Another example is the translation of the Hebrew *ruach* (spirit, wind) into a Greek concept connoting the un-Hebraic idea of "spirit vs. body."

No, even the most faithful of translations

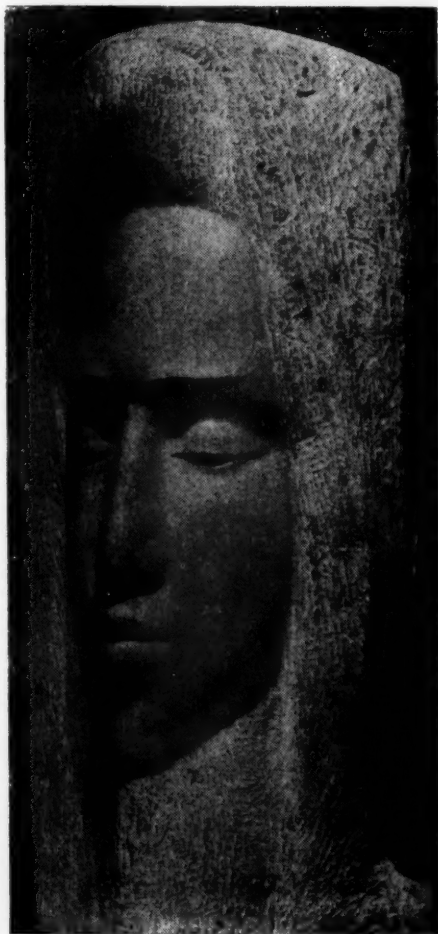
or the most skillful relaying of "content" cannot transmit the overtones and *chiaroscuro* of such pivotal terms as *m'siruth nefesh*, *kiddush ha-shem*, and *shema yisrael*; nor can translation provide even an iota of the clustered associations and feelings that these and countless other Hebrew phrases evoke. These expressions are the spiritual and cultural receptacles of our historic experience as a group from the day when Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees to the hour when Ben Gurion warns Nasser that the plagues visited on the Egyptians might be repeated and improved upon in our time. The ethos of the Hebrew is expressible in its fullness, in its inimitable flavor and savor in only one medium—in Hebrew; all other media are *ersatz*. Hebrew will always stand Gibraltar-firm in the spiritual-cultural bastion of Jewish life. Solomon Schechter was right: "The Jews of America cannot live without English, but will not survive without Hebrew."

In a penetrating essay titled "Jewish culture and education in the Diaspora" the late lamented Hayim Greenberg underscores the uniqueness of Hebrew and its continuous vitality. He points out that the official language of the Indian Union today is English and the same is true of Ireland, even though both revived countries have a continuous territorial history of many centuries. Only Israel reborn has as its official tongue the language of its original and continuing greatness. Dr. Greenberg then explains this unique historical phenomenon:

Hebrew was able to exist for two thousand years, without state or territory, and not as a museum exhibit but as a functional organ, because the language itself was a kind of "territory," a spiritual home, and because the *pathos* of Jewish life and creativity, of inner Jewish struggles and victories, was chiefly expressed in the Hebrew language . . . The "Galut" Hebrew itself drew its sustenance from the depths of traditional Hebrew, from the *lingua sancta*, from a spiritual stream which contained much more than nationalism, from the Jewish reservoir of great collective and individual spiritual endeavors. Without that background, Hebrew in Israel today would be a kind of Esperanto for immigrants bringing a Babel of tongues, perhaps no more than a pidgin Hebrew.

But, of course, without that background Zionism itself would probably not exist.

Just as Hebrew has in the past played the leading role in the drama of Jewish survival, so it is the key to our future as Jews in this land of the free. If we throw away this key which has no duplicates the resplendent House of Judaism which "the Lord hath built" will be closed to us and to our posterity. The great Schechter's caveat of a generation ago ought to be inscribed in our hearts and on the doorposts of our houses: "There is no future for Judaism in this country if it becomes alienated from Hebrew."



Queen Esther

RUTH NICKERSON

# Jewish Religion in Russia

By PAULINE C. GROSSMAN

ON JUNE 27, 1956, a delegation of seven Rabbis representing the New York Board of Rabbis, left for a brief tour of some of the principal cities of the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The purpose of the delegation was to determine the status of the Jews, to evaluate the conditions under which they had to live, and to find some means whereby they could, within the framework of the established government, be of some assistance; to explore by what means the younger generation could be drawn back to Synagogue affiliation; and to strengthen the morale of the Jewish population by the interest that they, American Rabbis, had in their welfare, so that they might not feel themselves cut off from contact with world Jewry.

Women were not part of this delegation, but as the wife of one of the delegates, trained in social service, I accompanied the group.

The largest number of Jews we could approach either as individuals or as a group was, of course, in the Synagogue, and there we found a heart-rending situation. At one time, cities with large Jewish populations could boast of many beautiful synagogues, seminaries for the training of rabbis and scholars, Talmud Torahs, and such cultural media in Yiddish and Hebrew as newspapers, periodicals, and the theatre. They were closely knit communities and from them had come world-renowned scholars who not only nurtured Jewish culture in their own communities, but constituted the source from which world Jewry drew its leaders.

At the close of World War I there was a population of approximately five million Jews within the Russian Empire. How did these Jews get into Russia, where the estab-

lished Greek Orthodox Church dominated the religious life of the country and was the right arm of the Czar? It was not the Jews who came into Russia; it was Russia, which, after the Napoleonic Wars, by military conquest possessed the places where Jews had settled in large numbers and annexed the lands bordering on the Vistula, where important Jewish populations lived. Throughout Czarist times, Jews were excluded from civil functions, but along with the other ethnic groups and religious sects that existed in the Russian Empire they were permitted the exercise of religious functions, the observance of which continued all through the years of periodic pogroms in spite of a barbed discrimination against the Jews.

Today only religious worship is permitted; there may be no other form of religious identification. A subtle way of weaning away the population from religious practice is through the methodical and persistent indoctrination of the younger generation in the atheistic cult of the State. Talmud Torahs have been prohibited. There comes to my mind the memory, at the time amusing and warming, of our arrival at the airport in Riga, Latvia, the border entrance and check-point into the USSR from Stockholm. Quite evidently the musicians in the dining room of the airport into which we had been ushered had been briefed about the arrival of a delegation of Rabbis, for they greeted us with the strains of the old Jewish lullaby, "Rozhinkas mit Mandeln," the lullaby Jewish mothers sang to their babies, telling them of the solace they will find in the study of Torah, the best of all investments. In retrospect it was an ironic and tragic travesty on what we subsequently found to be a strictly enforced constitutional law, a prohibition against teaching religion to youth under the



age of eighteen. Theoretically this law applies only to formal teaching in schools, but even where parents try to teach their children, there is rarely any real achievement because the parent of this generation, who himself has been subjected to the indoctrination of atheism, which is official in the USSR, seldom qualifies to teach systematically; and the child resists a way of life that is derided in his everyday associations in school and at play.

Consequently, in the Synagogue we found only the old—the old with nostalgic memories. The worshippers crowded close to the delegation, leaving their seats to come as near as they could to the Rabbi who was speaking from the pulpit. Men had left their work—a serious offense in the Soviet Union, for the work week is a six-day week with Sunday the official day of rest—to come to the Synagogue to see with their own eyes the wonder of American visitors—Rabbis who had come to worship in their Synagogue. Tears streamed down the faces of patriarchs, who were reliving the memories of former days with the tenseness of their whole being. Between sobs, one of them said: "You Rabbis are violating the Sabbath; you are kindling a fire in our hearts."

In the women's gallery—for in the Soviet Union, as elsewhere in most of Europe, women worship in a special section set apart and separate from the men worshippers—the women surged around me, seized and kissed my hand, felt my clothes and shook their heads in unbelief and wonder. "We never saw an American Rebbetzin. Do young people like you (my hair is gray) really go to Shul in America." And a long tale of the hardships and restrictive measures against the Jews was breathlessly poured out. Kosher meat is practically unobtainable. Ritual slaughter was forbidden in the days of the "Black One," one of the names by which Stalin is known. At the time, there seemed to be a relaxation of the restrictive laws, but they had been enforced so long and so harshly that dread fear still hangs over the Jews. "Today it is good; who knows tomorrow?" is the expressed and unexpressed fear.

Retribution, which may come retroactively, haunts them. This same fear, so obsessive that it cannot easily be exorcized, is present in the observance of all other forms of ritual practice—circumcision (only about 50% of children born to Jewish parents are circumcised), the rite of Bar Mitzvah, the religious form of the wedding ceremony. Only the rite of Jewish burial seems prevalent.

It is difficult to portray the means by which, bit by bit, these disclosures were made. A woman would edge up to me and occupy the seat next to me. How she displaced the then incumbent is still beyond my comprehension. But there she was. A deep sigh, a sudden clutch of my hand, a torrent of words, not all of them intelligible, but clear enough to convey her meaning! More than words, a sigh of pain, a shrug and an upturned palm, a gesture which was almost a verbal recital of the problems, the tragedies, the humiliations and injustices experienced not only by her but by the whole of her known world!

And then a sudden "Sh-sh! a Kooker!" (literally a *looker*; its real meaning is an *informer*). Then loudly a voice: "Now everything is changed. We have everything we want or need." This was followed by a chorus, like the chorus in the Greek plays of old: "Yes, everything is good now. We have everything we need." Why the sudden change? Another woman had edged into the seat on the other side of me. As clothes in the Soviet Union go, she was fairly well dressed, certainly better than anyone else there. She even wore a hat. Quite obviously she had been sent officially to counteract any adverse impression I might be getting by observation or interrogation. In a sprightly voice, while she looked authoritatively around her, she enumerated the good things now to be had: "Not only Kosher fowl, which is relatively easy to obtain, but even Kosher meat, and a plenty of everything. It is different now."

I felt a tug at my dress. A wrinkled old woman, almost in rags, her thin stray hair held back by a worn "babushka," drew my



head down, embraced me closely and kissed me. But it was not just to show me affection. Pressing my head close to her ear, she sobbed, "We must talk this way. Ears are on all sides. Who can believe? Will my son, the only one left to me, come back from prison? He asked for a visa to Israel and was sent away." Shortly after, in a subsequent visit to the Synagogue in Leningrad, we met a woman, who with her sister and husband had been imprisoned for a similar "offense" and had only then been released after serving seven of the ten years of the sentence. That chorus of "Everything is good now; you must talk that way" echoed and re-echoed in the assemblies of each of the synagogues and community groups we had contact with.

I had not come into the Soviet Union merely as a sightseer. I was, of course, interested in the vast human experience which are an integral part of a visit to any country, but I had dedicated this visit to an inquiry into and observation of the lives of the Jews; and so in a large measure I narrowed my search to making contact with Jews, talking to them and listening to what they had to tell me when and if they were willing to talk. We had not reached the youth in the synagogues, nor groups representing other than those religiously observant. I knew that there were Jews absorbed in the everyday life of the Soviet economy; that there were Jewish housewives and Jewish students and Jewish workers and professionals. I sought them in the stores, state-owned, of course, and stood in the long queues of purchasers in the *Gastronome* (the large state-owned groceries) and in the smaller stores that displayed their wares by pictures or wax forms, not by the article itself, for there are still great shortages of all commodities. I wandered into small factories, into a cobbler's shop and cleaning establishment, into city markets. My method of approach was very simple. My greeting was the traditional Hebrew greeting, "Shalom," a household word among Jews, and I watched for the flicker of recognition, an instant glimmer of response. But when

I attempted further contact, I became appallingly aware of an overwhelming fear. It was almost a repetition of the hysterical evasiveness we encountered in the Synagogues. But here it was not among the older folks only.

I stopped at a book stall, leafing through an English copy of Hemingway's *Old Man and the River*. I greeted the attendant. His eyes lit up and his mouth began to form the return salutation. Then a veil came over his face. The spark of recognition faded. His face became immobile. An almost imperceptible, backward glance warned me. People had stopped at the stand. He watched them furtively. I became "absorbed" in my reading. When we were again alone, I resumed my attempt at conversation. Again there was that furtive look in all directions. Persuasively I asked questions, careful to become silent and casual in my reading when any one approached. At first there was no vocal response, but only a pleading look, an explosive sound of annoyance; then, stooping low as though he were looking for merchandise under the counter, and in a voice high-pitched to almost a shriek, he said: "What can I do? What can anyone do?" And in a final burst of anguish, "It is best not to talk."

In many ways and in many places this dominating fear asserted itself. Jews are bewildered and will take no undue risks. Only very recently would they permit themselves even to walk, with, much less to talk to, a stranger. Time and again we invited people to our hotel, or asked to be invited to a home. Instantly and abruptly the conversation ceased and our companion lost himself in the crowd.

With the young people the indoctrination in atheism has been thorough. Although theoretically there is complete separation of Church and State, and on that ground the State does not allow what it calls the competitive system of church education, factually the State incorporates into every phase of education the teaching of atheism as its religion. There is an astounding institution in Leningrad—the Museum of Atheism

and Religion — housed in what was once a magnificent cathedral. A visit there is a unique experience. Historic church documents and relics and religious paintings and sculpture are dramatically displayed, their meanings reinterpreted with distorted emphasis on the persecution of the church functionaries and the oppressive rulers who ground the Russian people into peonage and serfdom — exponents of the economic evils that the Soviet Union claims to have obliterated. To us far-fetched and undoubtedly amusing, but convincing to the indoctrinated mind of the youth nurtured on the principles of atheism is the interpretation of the story of Eve and the apple she offered to Adam as the historic foundation of the capitalistic system of deception and exploitation. This kind of ridicule is extensive and repudiates all forms of religious worship. In this way the Government answers the accusation that religious schools and churches and synagogues have been closed and their premises diverted to other projects, such as puppet theatres, gymnasiums, museums and exhibition halls, with the half-truth that the numerous religious institutions of former days are superfluous for present needs, and that enough of them have been left open to adequately supply the needs of those who still attend religious worship.

In the case of synagogues, *enough* meant that one synagogue and two small meeting places are to be found in Moscow, with a population of close to 300,000 Jews; one synagogue in Kiev; one synagogue in Leningrad; and one in Odessa, which formerly had sixty-five synagogues, the present surviving one being situated in a remote factory district on the outskirts of the city.

During Stalin's time monasteries, seminaries and rabbinical schools were closed, and priests and rabbis were divested of their jurisdiction and influence. The present Government permits the reorganization of seminaries for the training of religious leaders. Several such seminaries and some monasteries in the Greek Orthodox Church are now functioning. One of them, the monastery at Zagorsk, not far from Moscow,

is a "showplace" to which guides bring visitors.

For the Jew the problem is more complex. Jewish life is organic. It must function as a living vital force. The Jewish youth of today in Russia does not have the training requisite for preparation as a Jewish religious leader. Nevertheless, this Jewish youth has not completely cut himself off from the environmental influences and hereditary patterns of his forebears. His emotional ties with his past have not been eradicated, for the human relationship between parent and child remains a warm attachment. A young guide in the Moscow Art Museum volunteered the information that she is Jewish and that she visits her parents frequently, and always with her little daughter for the Passover Seder. She knows what pleasure this brings them, although religion no longer has meaning for her. A student at the Moscow University, who went out of his way to take us to the Metro and even insisted on paying our fare, offered this information: "I am Jewish but I do not believe in God. My parents do." An engineer came to our hotel in Odessa, evidently sent officially, for he knew our name and our room number, and he alone of all whom we had met and talked to, came openly to our hotel to tell us that even though he was a Jew, he could not believe in any religion; but that his mother, whom he had brought with him, went to the Synagogue for all religious services.

Such statements by non-conforming children of devout parents can undoubtedly be cited in any country in any part of the world, with this difference: that in the USSR this deviation is fostered and nurtured by the State through every possible medium of indoctrination — the press, the theatre, the cinema, as well as educational institutions — with the expectation and determination that the end-result will be the complete eradication of religious faith and observance, despite the present official toleration of attendance at church or mosque or synagogue.

This emotional identification expresses

itself in ways other than by personal ties and affectionate relationship. Our American opera star, Jan Peerce, had been invited by the Soviet Union to make a concert tour of the USSR. We were his guests at the concert in Moscow. He was received with overwhelming enthusiasm by the audience. Applause rocked the auditorium after each selection of the varied but largely classical program he presented; but when he sang a Hebrew selection and an old Yiddish folk song, the applause was thunderous. Encore after encore was demanded; and even after he had given seven encores of Yiddish and Hebrew melodies, some of them liturgical, the audience would not be silenced.

Outside in the promenade hall, one of the Rabbis who could speak Russian stopped to talk to some of the people. Before long a crowd had gathered round him, asking him whether it was really true that cultured folk in America, even among the young, attended religious services and participated in Jewish activities. Suddenly that inevitable "Sh-sh!" and the haunting fear that there might be present an informer quickly dispersed them. It was hard to reconcile this alert response to Jewish music, which undoubtedly evoked memories, with the determined attitude which rejected Jewish practice.

After the concert a young woman came to speak to us. We had had some intimate contact with religious Jews. This contact seemed to offer us an opportunity to learn more of these young Jews who were nostalgically drawn to the past only by emotional ties; so we asked her to meet with us either at her home or at our hotel. "Oh, no!" she said. "I cannot. I have just been reinstated as a teacher. I do not want to risk losing my job again." Then she disappeared. It was not only the Jews who practiced their religion that were terrified. During the purge of the doctors and during the last decade of Stalin's life, it became obvious that his intention was not only to eradicate Jewish culture and destroy the Jews as a religious community, but to eliminate all Jews from official posts and deprive them

of their livelihood. Practically all Jews lost their jobs. Some have since been reinstated, but fear that this might be just an interlude still haunts them.

The future of Jewry and Jewish life behind the Iron Curtain? In times of stress and strain, the Divine spark in man reaches out to enkindle light in dark places. Out of all this there emerges a strange spirit of hope. There is that in man which is the soul; and in the soul lie depths of spiritual courage. Perhaps this spiritual courage may reveal itself in the present generation of young Jews, who, whether they will it or not, are identified as Jews by act of governmental procedure. Everyone in the Soviet Union must carry at all times his identity card. On this card is stated his nationality. In the vast network of nationalisms which make up the Soviet Union, each nationality is a distinct entity and is so recognized—Muscovite, Ukrainian, Uzbek, etc. But the Jew's card is marked Jew—a nationalist, not a religious, connotation. His diploma is marked Jew. When he applies for a job, he is a Jew. When he travels from one city to another he is a Jew, for he must show his identity card when he purchases a ticket. When he registers at a hotel, he is a Jew. There is no disability or discrimination attached to this cognomen—at least not at this time. It is simply stated as a fact. And since he knows himself to be a Jew and is made aware of it on every official occasion, there may eventually come into his consciousness an awakening of his need for spiritual identification with his people, their culture, their religious fellowship—a resurgence of the spirit that has survived through the ages, an awakening to the positive values in Judaism and its direction toward a life with spiritual as well as economic meaning, a reorientation of himself as part of a Jewish fellowship with participation in the organization of its religious life, derived from an understanding of the basic Jewish idealism which has always equated social justice with the tenets of religious practice and observance.

# Recent German Military Writing

By GABRIEL GERSH

**D**URING THE PAST few years, a considerable number of publications dealing with military affairs in general and the last war in particular have appeared in Western Germany. Ranging from short pamphlets of a few score pages to massive volumes, they include a regular monthly devoted to military sciences, which has just completed its second year, and various weeklies representing the interests of the rank and file of the former German fighting services. Their authors and contributors are, almost without exception, well-known generals and staff officers of the former German *Wehrmacht*, among them the men who have been advising the Federal Chancellor on the technical aspects of the West German defense problem.

There is nothing surprising in the appearance of this literature at the present time. It is still a relatively modest volume of writing compared to that produced by the German army leaders after the first World War, and but for allied restrictions and general lack of interest among the public in the immediate post-World War II period, it would have appeared much earlier. Very little of it owes its inspiration to the recent controversy over NATO, EDC, and the contribution of the Bonn Government to the defense of Western Europe. But it was inevitable that much of it should reflect this issue, contribute, however indirectly, to its discussion, and influence public opinion about the course to be followed. It is impossible not to read and evaluate this military literature against the background of a resurrected German army. Its main immediate usefulness, however, is in the light it throws on the fundamental psychological aspects of

German soldiership as it revealed itself in the dilemmas and conflicts of the last war.

The books and publications noticed below fall broadly into three groups. First, the strictly technical and operational histories of the second World War by Admiral Assmann and General von Tippelskirch — these pay only marginal attention to politics and moral issues. Second, the personal war memoirs of army commanders and chiefs of staff like Speidel, Westphal, and Guderian, in which operational analyses of specific campaigns are interlaced with personal reminiscences and views on fundamental political and moral problems. Lastly, argumentative and outspokenly polemical dissertations on the past, present and future of the German army, ranging from General Heusinger's mild-mannered apologies of the German military mind to the vitriolic pamphlets by Halder and Guderian.

The ex-servicemen's weeklies, like *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung* and *Der Adler* (for ex-*Luftwaffe* men), are mainly concerned with the material and moral rehabilitation of their readers and the preservation of a spirit of comradeship among them. The *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau*, on the other hand, which in its sub-title calls itself "*Zeitschrift fuer Europaeische Sicherheit*," is designed to interest the professional and expert, combining in its pages severely technical post-mortems on last war campaigns with the scientific study of post-war military developments. It appeals for a new and reformed German military outlook in keeping with the democratic spirit of NATO.

Underlying this spate of military literature is the basic problem of the German soldier as a political animal. Therefore, it cannot



surprise us that all this writing, whether looking back or into the future, is intensely preoccupied with the problems of duty, divided loyalty, individual and collective responsibility, and political morality, and acquires its sharpest edge when touching upon the events of July 20, 1944, the day of the unsuccessful officers' plot to dispose of Hitler.

Of the two bulky operational histories of the second World War, General von Tippelskirch's *Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, with its 700 closely packed pages, is the more thorough and comprehensive as well as the more sober and objective, although not the more readable. The author, a former general staff officer who during the war held operational commands on practically all German fronts, writes in an atrociously involved and at times almost incomprehensible style, but his book is the result of careful research into all accessible sources. With its numerous maps, charts and diagrams, it is probably about as full and reliable an account of the fighting as one can hope to obtain from a German pen at the present time. Admiral Assmann's *Deutsche Schicksalsjahre* covers more or less the same material with the same object in view, but, despite greater readability, it is less successful in its endeavor to achieve sober objectivity. This is surprising because the admiral, who was Chief of the Historical Section of the German Naval Supreme Command, had access not only to practically all German operational documentation, but in addition spent nearly three and a half years after the war in England, at the request of the Admiralty, which enabled him to study much of the evidence accumulated on the Allied side, an advantage which was denied General von Tippelskirch. Even writing from London, Assmann has not been able to disentangle fact from fiction.

General von Tippelskirch avoids these pitfalls by keeping strictly to the operational level. Sketching the origins of the outbreak of war with a few introductory paragraphs which blame everyone and no one, he confines himself to the technicalities of a refer-

ence book without getting involved in the ideological issues. This saves him from the kind of observation of which the admiral is all too fond, as for instance that "it was the higher historic mission of the German intervention in Norway to bring about the inclusion of the racially related Norwegian people in the Germanic community of fate which rested on a common spiritual and ethical basis."<sup>1</sup> That a shrewd old sea-dog should fall for Quisling balderdash of this kind, and repeat it for the benefit of future generations of Germans, is distressing, but Admiral Assmann possesses neither skepticism nor General von Tippelskirch's bland aloofness. It is almost disarming to watch him accept at face value one tall statement by Hitler after another, then burst into righteous indignation when it turns out to be bluff, propaganda, or just uncontrolled maniacal rambling. It is, of course, not the Admiral's fault that Hitler was not an honest politician whose words could be weighed for their significance and whose reactions could be calculated. However, it is his fault that he never quite found out.

General von Tippelskirch and Admiral Assmann echo one another when dealing with the abortive attempt on Hitler's life. Both are brief and emphatic in rejecting the attempt as a means of solving the German dilemma in the summer of 1944. General von Tippelskirch thinks that there was not one among Germany's top-ranking military leaders who could bring himself to approve or support the forcible removal of Hitler, and he agrees with General Speidel that even Rommel was against assassination and recommended the Fuehrer's deposition and imprisonment. "Besides weighty ethical considerations," says the general, "there was the fear of being branded by history as traitors and originators of a new and highly effective stab in the back legend which it would have been impossible to destroy later on."<sup>2</sup> He argues besides that the attempt

1. Kurt von Tippelskirch, *Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges* (Bonn: Athenaeum-Verlag, 1951), p. 231.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 340.



was disapproved by the majority of the *Wehrmacht* and the people—an argument repeated emphatically by General Guderian in his memoirs—"and the sense of responsibility and genuine patriotism which undoubtedly inspired the conspirators"<sup>3</sup> was neither understood nor appreciated.

Admiral Assmann concedes that the revolt of the armed forces against the head of the state can be justified in peacetime, but "in war the armed forces, in any state in the world, have but one task—to achieve victory. Anything liable to deflect them from this is immoral and reprehensible."<sup>4</sup> He concedes further that "in the higher regions where politics and the conduct of war are gradually merging additional responsibilities besides purely military ones are placed on an officer, especially in the political sphere," and that cases can arise in practice "where dire need compels him to deviate from the principle."<sup>5</sup> But he insists, along with General Westphal, that the oath given to Hitler was a severe stumbling block. In his view, which is shared in turn by General Heusinger, to break this oath was a betrayal, and he adds: "Politics gladly make use of any betrayal but invariably also despise the traitor. We may rest assured that in future our former enemies will prefer to deal with Germans who kept their oath rather than with those who broke it."<sup>6</sup>

This is the operative sentence in Admiral Assmann's book, as far as it deals with the political aspects of German soldiery, and its importance as a clue to the conflicts of loyalty this implies in the event of an armed conflict between East and West, is obvious. In Admiral Assmann's view it was not an accident that the attempt against Hitler originated with the armed forces, for they were the only organization to possess the necessary weapons and technical facilities. But on the other hand, he says, "the army, owing to its mental make-up, was less well

fitted to overthrow the head of the state than anyone else, since, in view of its tradition, education and duty to its conscience, it was bound to regard itself as its strongest support."<sup>7</sup> The admiral does not elaborate this thesis, but General Westphal does.

General Westphal is a professional soldier who served under the Kaiser, the Republic, and Hitler, and during the last war was successively chief of staff to Rommel in the western desert, to Kesselring in Italy, and Rundstedt on the western invasion front. His book, *Heer in Fesseln*,<sup>8</sup> is short and comparatively readable. It falls into two parts, dealing respectively with the development, structure, and general make-up of the German army during the last thirty years, and the three main campaigns in which the author served. Of these, the second part is of little interest since it contains no information not already known from other sources. The first is all the more instructive. General Westphal makes none of the exaggerated claims for the general staff which characterize General Halder's early and ill-timed pamphlet, "*Hitler als Feldher.*"<sup>9</sup> He has no use for Hitler but does not call him "a bandit and marauder who hated professional soldiers because of their deep inner ties with Christianity, professional ethics, and tradition."<sup>10</sup> He is contemptuous of Keitel, but does not abuse him, and he is far from subscribing to Halder's implied view that the German general staff was at bottom a sound and businesslike organization which would have known very well how to finish off the Russians had it not been for Hitler's amateurish interference. He is equally far from suggesting, as Halder does, that the second World War was a good thing, that it was another heroic struggle in the defense of the Fatherland, and that if it had not been bungled by an "inexperienced amateur" and "godless adventurer," Germany would have succeeded in conquering the world. He is

3. *Ibid.*, p. 343.

4. Kurt Assmann, *Deutsche Schicksalsjahre* (Wiesbaden: Verlag Eberhard Brockhaus, 1950), pp. 192-193.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 194-195.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 310.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 401.

8. Siegfried Westphal, *Heer in Fesseln* (Bonn: Athenaem-Verlag, 1950).

9. Franz Halder, *Hitler als Feldherr* (Muenchen: Dom-Verlag, 1949).

10. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

critical of the Western Allies but readily acknowledges their military strength and courage, and he has not a single word of comment on the Soviet Union. This may be because he did not serve on the Russian front. It may equally be for other, subtler reasons.

The title of General Westphal's book states his main thesis that the German army was "in fetters" and never a free agent able to play its destined part as a loyal servant of the nation. It was fettered by its own ill-conceived and misguided "tradition," and by Hitler. The second of these enslavements followed logically from the first and only this, says General Westphal, enables one "to see the deeper reasons why the German soldier gave his services to the Hitler regime until the end."<sup>11</sup> This ill-conceived tradition had its roots in an exaggerated literal interpretation of Seeckt's originally sound thesis that the German soldier must be a strictly non-political animal owing blind allegiance to the political leadership of the state. But, argues General Westphal, this "led among even the highest-ranking officers to indifference and complete lack of judgment in political matters. What was only right and proper and even beneficial during the Weimar Republic, was to have unforeseeable and fateful consequences under the dictatorship."<sup>12</sup>

This is, of course, a familiar argument, and it is being expounded along more or less identical lines by all German military writers today. It hardly explains everything but it explains just what the German ex-soldier of today wants to have explained. Where General Westphal differs from men like Assmann, Tippleskirch, and Guderian is in not making the same allowance to the top-ranking military leaders that he grants to the ordinary soldier. This ordinary soldier acted in "good faith and to the best of his conscience and belief; for him there could be no distinction between a 'just' and an 'unjust' war."<sup>13</sup> But this does not apply to

the generals. "The decisive factor was that the top-ranking military leaders were equally convinced that it was their duty to remain non-political. There can be no doubt that this was wrong. The duty of the army commanders does not exhaust itself in strict military obedience. Over and above this they are charged with a higher political responsibility toward the nation."<sup>14</sup> In other words, it is their duty not only to act, but also on occasion to think, and in this they failed.

It is instructive to see how two men of such diametrically opposed temperaments as General Guderian and General Heusinger react to this central proposition. The former is as bluff, crude, and outspoken as the latter attempts to be subtle, sensitive, and non-committal. General Guderian, creator and leader of Hitler's armored divisions, and his last chief of the army general staff sees no subtleties and does not get himself involved in any non-military complications. The 450 pages of his memoirs<sup>15</sup> deal almost exclusively with the technicalities of the military operations in which he was concerned, and contain very few, rather off-hand references to the political and moral issues underlying them. The question of the oath of loyalty does not occur to him, and the tangled conflict of conscience raised by the revolt of July 20, 1944, does not stir him, except in one respect. "At that time a large part of the German people still believed firmly in Hitler, and had the attempt succeeded they would have been convinced that the conspirators had eliminated the only man capable of bringing the war to a tolerable end. And the onus would have been on the officer corps, the generals, and the general staff, during the war and afterwards. The hatred and contempt of the people would have turned against the soldiers."<sup>16</sup>

This unique over-simplification settles the issue for General Guderian. General Heusinger goes to the opposite extreme and dissolves the issue in a lengthy series of subtle

11. Siegfried Westphal, *Heer in Fesseln*, p. 93.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

15. Heinz Guderian, *Erinnerungen eines Soldaten* (Heidelberg: Verlag Kurt Vowinkel, 1951).

16. *Ibid.*, p. 291.

variations and qualifications. In the Hitler army he was Chief of Operations in the Army General Staff, a key position particularly suitable for the observation of the moral climate of the army during the critical years, and like Admiral Assmann he was present when Colonel Stauffenberg's bomb exploded. His book, *Befehl im Widerstreit*,<sup>17</sup> is a curious literary hybrid, which traces the fate of the German army from 1923 to 1945 in a sequence of nearly one hundred film-script-like scenes, flashes and dialogues. However, in his endeavor to look at the problem from as many angles as possible, he loses his own point of view, and in the end fails to work out a single issue clearly and to state it unequivocally. By sketching the moral development of the army in terms of human individuals, their reactions and relations, he does in fact no more than illustrate in nearly 400 large pages the half-dozen basic issues which General Westphal sets forth and defines in 100 small ones. The argument is thus not widened but merely watered down, the evidence multiplied but not strengthened.

Yet it is baffling and disconcerting to see how much General Heusinger disagrees with General Westphal's arguments, only to agree with his conclusions—that the generals were "in fetters" and caught powerless in their own tradition. General Westphal argues that they had lost the faculty to think and judge for themselves, and were thus dragged along with Hitler. General Heusinger, in his last talk with Hitler, in September, 1944, argues with the Fuehrer that he must allow them to use these very faculties. Hitler demands that his generals should obey his orders as unconditionally as the meanest private, to which Heusinger answers: "That will not always be easy. The majority of generals have passed through a thorough military training, they're used to thinking things out for themselves and taking their share of responsibility. It will hardly be possible to forbid them to think, to turn them

into uncritical organs, and to force them into actions which may go against their conscience."<sup>18</sup>

It seems clear that the attempt of July 20, 1944 has established itself as a kind of crossroads of German political and military morality. General Heusinger finally comes to the conclusion that "everyone had to solve this conflict in his own heart, there was no solution in principle valid for all, only tragic, insoluble contradictions of duty."<sup>19</sup> These contradictions vibrate through this entire literature; all other problems are inextricably tied up with them, radiate from them, are drawn toward them as if by a magnet. The moral which the German public draws from the events of the July 20th attempt will largely determine the moral code of the new German army, the position of this army within the state and its relationship to the civilian government. It is liable to exert a long-term influence on the German concept of military honor, duty and obedience, on the very meaning of loyalty; in short, it may decisively affect the reliance which the Atlantic powers can place on the new West German fighting force. The stab-in-the-back legend certainly is, as General Heusinger says, in contradiction to the known facts. On the contrary, it is stirring noisily on the extreme right wing, and it may be significant that the generals, on the whole united in their determination to counteract and wipe out "neutralism" and the "ohne mich" policy, are attacking it with vigorous arguments. It only shows that in the mind of the ordinary ex-servicemen whom General Remer, the man who put down the revolt in Berlin, is trying to attract to his neo-Nazi movement, the issue is as yet far from settled.

But clearly Dr. Adenauer must soon have an answer to this. In the absence of a firm ruling from the generals, the military review, *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau*, attempts to give it in one of its recent issues. In a lengthy article entitled "Der Geist der

17. Adolf Heusinger, *Befehl im Widerstreit* (Tuebingen: Verlag Rainer Wunderlich, 1950).

18. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 240.

Deutschen Armee,"<sup>20</sup> the writer, Dr. Robert Knauss, explains that German ex-servicemen must, after all, reform their ideas. The question in what spirit a German contingent is to be recruited and trained, he says, cannot be discussed too soon. For there can be no question of resurrecting, in this new force, the old patterns and the old spirit of the Weimar Reichswehr or the Hitler Wehrmacht. "Whoever hankers after this sort of thing, shows that he has learned nothing from the experience of the last three decades. Our danger is not that we neglect what was good and useful in the old tradition, but that we fail to muster the courage necessary to recognize and admit the errors and mistakes of the past and avoid them in the new attempt."<sup>21</sup>

In his analysis of the army of the Weimar and Hitler state, the writer goes considerably farther than the generals. He states plainly that the Weimar Reichswehr was "a state within the state" which "instinctively rejected parliamentary democracy,"<sup>22</sup> and he calls it adulterated "militarism if the armed forces exercise decisive influence upon policy, if the arm holding the weapon, instead of the heart, presumes the right to lead the body of the state."<sup>23</sup> Two basic demands

must therefore be made of the West German soldier. First, he must unconditionally accept the primary and overriding authority of the political leadership as personified in a civilian Defense Minister who is responsible to parliament. The objection that in the past soldiers and generals followed Hitler's policy so faithfully because they accepted his overriding authority and failed to form their own political judgment, is countered by the assertion that a "distinction must be made between a general political education and political activity, especially in the service of a party, which must remain prohibited in Germany as it is prohibited to the British or the Swiss soldier."<sup>24</sup> The second demand is that the "new German soldier must be inspired by the firm conviction that despite all its deficiencies and shortcomings the democratic state and parliamentary forms of government are, in the last resort, always preferable to a totalitarian leader state."<sup>25</sup>

The writer ends with a scarcely concealed plea to the German ex-serviceman to place himself at the disposal of the Atlantic Powers, because "comradeship-in-arms has always been the strongest binding force, and the comradeship-in-arms of the European soldiers will be the shortest way toward a united Europe."<sup>26</sup>

20. Robert Knauss, "Der Geist der Deutschen Armee," *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau*, March 16, 1954, p. 8.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

## WITHIN THE FAMILY

By HARRY ROSKOLENKO

I knew my father and I knew him not,  
For I knew his anger and his changing smile,  
The fear behind his God when he prayed  
To the numbness of his humbling heart.

The solitude of his speech became a voice  
Training me for harsher authority,  
Edging out terror from my complaining  
mother.

I thought of her as a shrew, retching up  
My father's natural, sentimental poverty,

Lamenting for a world more religion-ridden.  
She was pious, and prayed for purity.

My mother owned God in her strident lament  
And every confusion devouring love's  
simplicity,

And every sentiment that reduced an air of life  
In some bizarre complex she desired . . .  
Fourteen times she brought forth life,  
But nine times birth was death, filling  
A cemetery with her womb's fruitfulness.



# Waldo Frank as a Jewish Writer

By WILLIAM BITTNER

THE "JEWISH NOVEL" in America has almost become a stereotype: the story of immigrants from eastern Europe struggling for survival in the confusing chaos of American slums. Usually the setting is New York, and usually the characters are run through all or part of the journey from the lower east side to the upper west side or the Bronx, and then to Long Island or Westchester. Bounded on one end by *Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl* and the other by *Marjorie Morningstar*, it is a story of financial success and spiritual defeat: the old folks remain pious and Orthodox, exploited by the *Shabbas Sheppers* but quaint and lovable; the second generation turn aggressive businessfolk, a trifle foreign in their inflections but religious only at weddings, bar mitzvahs, and funerals, and use Yiddish as a thief's cant. The third generation are pale would-be artists or radicals. It is the story of assimilation, accompanied by a wistful glance at the tremendous heritage being discarded.

In the novels of Waldo Frank, this whole concept is turned upside down. The assimilation is not of Jews into American materialism, but of America into a share of the Covenant. "The nearer the Jew comes to identifying himself with the immemorial values of the Jewish past," Frank said in *The Jew in Our Day*, "the closer he will be to the deepest values of the American tradition, and to the strongest vitalities of American culture." Frank bids Jews, confronted with the gap between the traditional ideals of America and the egocentric shortsightedness of "practical" Americans, to remain loyal to Jewishness, and thereby foster the "Great Tradition" of America.

Waldo Frank, born in 1889, is the grandson of a German Jewish immigrant. His

father, a prosperous lawyer, had abandoned Jewish ritual life and become an early member of the Society for Ethical Culture. His mother's family had lived in the south since colonial days, but kept in touch with their European relatives, and at the time of Waldo's birth they were successfully engaged in manufacturing in New York City. Brought up in the middle class milieu of Manhattan's upper west side, Frank was hardly conscious of Jewishness as a child. He graduated from Yale, lived for a time in France, became an editor of the *Seven Arts*, and wrote his first novels before any profound realization of Jewishness came to him.

Probably not even Frank himself could today trace the influences that brought him to an awareness of the Jewish spiritual heritage. Ethical Culture had sufficed for men like his father as what Frank calls "a semblance of a creed: one which would still the stirring of the past, bring them no preoccupation to conflict with their affairs and, on the contrary, fit them the more aptly and the more politely for the life of respectable material domination which America afforded." The earliest and most persistent influences on Frank were Whitman and Tolstoy; he became an avid reader of both before he was out of high school. Spinoza, somewhat later, pervaded his thinking and became the basis for his metaphysical vocabulary. Marx (whom Frank calls a Hebrew prophet whose chosen people, the proletariat, are offered privileges but not responsibilities) probably contributed only collaterally to Frank's rejection of his father's liberal, rationalist, Jeffersonian attitudes.

Frank's first two novels, *The Unwelcome man* and *The Dark Mother*, were interesting mainly for their use of Freudian psychology. Each was permeated with mother-substi-



tutes, sister-fixations, and other impediments that since have become standard in American fiction. In neither is there a Jewish character; indeed, when Frank continued the story of the protagonist of *The Dark Mother*, in *The Death and Birth of David Markand*, fifteen years later, he diligently traced out a hitherto unknown Jewish ancestor for him. In the book completed just after *The Dark Mother*, *Our America*, he included a significant chapter on the Jews in America, expressing the ideas quoted above on Jews who had abandoned their spiritual heritage, and concluding, "Quite as dead as the old idolatries is the heresy of the dominion of empirical thought: quite as futile as the art of the old secluded classes, has become the arrogant belief that art and religion can be dispensed with. . . . In the American chaos the Jew went under. We shall see how, in the American birth, he rises up."

Frank's use of the novel is traditionally Jewish. Abandoning the European concept of art as a "mirror held up to nature," he attempts, in his writing, not to reflect the world, but to form man's attitude toward it. Paul Rosenfeld, thirty years ago, raised the question of why Frank did not use a form more conventionally associated with his purpose; he suggested that verse like that of Whitman would be more appropriate. The answer seems obvious enough. This is an age of the novel, rather than of poetry. Indeed, from the first World War to the present, fiction has had more influence on people's ideas than has any other literary form. Until recently, very few novelists, it is true, have used the novel so systematically as the conveyor of a philosophy; but the younger generation of writers seem to be expressing something very close to Frank's ideas in a form very similar to his, even though most of them have never read his work!

Frank has altered every facet of fiction technique to express his meaning, but his greatest change is in the conception of character. Western writers, following the Greek tradition, considered people as separate "souls," with an unchangeable core called

"character," each following his separate path, struggling against God and man to express his identity. Frank, however, believes that the person grows through awareness of being a part of all other persons; and that when the person is conscious of his place as a part of all things, he is aware of God. He has affirmed this concept in his profound knowledge of science and psychology; the one thing he takes on faith is the ultimate unity, the unity expressed in "Hear, O Israel . . ." He would attribute the same power to a society or a nation: shedding the ego that pits it against the welfare of others, including its own parts, it becomes godly.

Thus the plot of every one of Frank's novels is the growth of persons into an awareness of God. *City Block*, his third novel and one of his best, is a collection of short stories about various people who live in one block on Manhattan's east side. In each story there is conflict between isolation and community. Frank was concerned, at this stage, only with the development of the person; he was not yet ready to show the progress of a society toward awareness of its function in the scheme of things. Nor do all the characters succeed in growing into wholeness. Some fail utterly; some succeed partially; a few enjoy a moment of illumination, a recapturable appreciation of their function and of the unity—God—that binds them all.

This mystical understanding is made most vivid in the chapter entitled "John the Baptist." The main character, a musician and scholar whom Frank obviously modeled after himself, seeks vainly in study, in his art, for a purpose in his life. He has tried and rejected society's organized substitutes for personal spiritual development. Under the guidance of an old tramp in a park, however, he receives a mystic revelation of seeing all things as parts of a great whole. As well as binding the stories together as a unit, this obviously symbolizes Frank's own illumination, after study of the Kabbalists and other Jewish philosophers, that completely transformed his writing and thinking.

One of the characters in *City Block* is a Person (Frank capitalizes to indicate an aware person or people) throughout; and in his next novel, *Rahab*, he traced the development of that character. Again it was necessary for him to create his own form, since he was expressing ideas not conventionally treated in the novel, and *Rahab* suffers for lack of a fully developed technique. It did, however, serve as proving ground for the literary devices that provide *Holiday* with its originality and finish. In addition, *Holiday* has a symbolic depth that puts it quite outside the normal terms of the novel. It has something of the Morality play in it, and its setting in the south is like an old-time preacher's description of eternity in terms of the geography of Palestine.

All three of these novels on the Person were written within a few years; the first two were published in 1922 and the last in 1924. This vein, which Frank calls the "Lyric Novels," was running out. He produced one more, *Chalk Face*, a Poe-like study of the psychological and psychical impact of an ego run wild, but like Poe's work, the mystery is too deep and personal to be delved in the author's lifetime. In it the quest for the Person turns inward and is stunted. When he wrote it, Frank had already gone on to other things.

For the next twenty years Frank was to work on the parallel development of the Person and the People; a society aware of God made up of persons living in terms of that awareness. Writing about Persons is nearly as difficult as being a Person in a world of self-centered nations that war with one another, betray one another, and foster conflict and betrayal among their citizens. One is torn between loss of self and physical survival. Moreover, lacking the dominance of such Persons, no People can come to spiritual awareness. Frank's job was exactly that of the ancient prophets, but he could not rely on simple exhortation.

In the ensuing time he wrote his most famous pieces of social criticism: *Virgin Spain* (still considered by the Spanish as the modern book that shows greatest under-

standing of their country), *America Hispana*, *The Re-Discovery of America*, *Chart for Rough Water*, and *South American Journey*. He visited Russia, wrote *Dawn in Russia*, and tested whether the revolutionary movement might be converted to consciousness of God; by 1937 he had decided it could not, and drew the wrath of the party-liners who had reluctantly praised him before. Two novels, *The Death and Birth of David Markand* and *The Bridegroom Cometh*, trace his quest, and *Summer Never Ends*, like *Chalk Face*, signals the end of a phase in his career.

Save for the time he spent lecturing, both in Latin America and in the United States, he devoted the war years to his only novel with a wholly Jewish setting, probably the best novel on the early German Jewish adjustment to America. *Island in the Atlantic* is, as well, a biography of New York City and the United States between the Civil War and the outbreak of the first World War. The universality of the book is made most evident when it is compared with one that, in a middle western setting, traces the greater part of the same era, *Raintree County*. In each, the country is shown entering a *cul de sac* of materialism, a fixation on growth, a spiritual nadir.

*Island in the Atlantic* is the story of Frank's father's generation, the sons of pious although westernized German Jews, who rode the tide of expansion, put their faith in reason, and modeled themselves after the Dutch and English "old families" in their social life. True to form, Jonathan Hartt becomes a lawyer, his brothers businessmen; true to form his son is a member of a more "artistic" profession. But Jonathan regains the mystic depth of his father; his niece, daughter of the more worldly of his brothers, becomes a Zionist; and in the last, highly effective section, drawn from the last voyage of the *Titanic*, the rebirth of Jewishness in America is tied in with the coming of the Eastern immigrants. Alone of the best writers on the Jewish-American scene, Frank has shown not only the retreat from religion, but the return to it after the material temp-

tations of the "land of opportunity" have, like an acid bath, washed all imperfections and weakened strands away and left the solid core, the element of unity, that is the heart of Judaism.

As well as being a powerful Jeremiah-like blast at Jews without God, *Island in the Atlantic* is a witty and vivid picture of life among the upper-middle class German Jews of New York at the height of their prosperity, the Sephardic family into which Jonathan marries, and what is left in each of Jewish life. Frank has long planned writing a sequel, that picks up in 1912 where the previous work left off; and considering no more than his propensity to use his friends as models for his characters, and his wide acquaintance among the most interesting people of the time, from artists like Leo Ornstein to such scholars as Adolph Oko, it sounds like a book worth waiting for, even if we have to wait another twenty years.

Throughout his years of social investigation, Waldo Frank was seeking the spiritual depths of many nations; their progress toward becoming Peoples, aware of the power that held them together as a society and of the ultimate unity in which all societies and persons are a part. The most hopeful signs he found in the Americas, but he was more severe in pointing out the shortcomings of the United States, and more sympathetic in praising the qualities of Latin America, although in the import of his observations, good and evil came close to balancing out in both hemispheres. Since he was a guest in other countries, he was more polite; at home he talked like a Dutch uncle. In the same way, since he is a Jew, Frank does not mince words in writing about Jews. A detached observer will realize that this severity indicates a really deeper affection, a sense of equal responsibility, an identification with all Jews and all Americans; but when Frank published *The Jew in Our Day*, many Jewish reviewers found such olympic detachment quite out of their grasp.

Although some of the articles that were included in *The Jew in Our Day* had been written many years before, it is surprising

that Frank had not previously issued a book on the Jews. A people held together by an idea rather than national boundaries, language, or other externals, they provide a purer example of the binding unity that Frank considers the creative force in the world. "Why, unlike other small peoples in the paths of greater ones, did the Jews not disappear in time?" asks Frank. "Because," he answers, "they could avail themselves of a certain survival-force . . . their prophetic vision of a particular [temporal] relation in time with the universal and eternal." A way of life in which the everyday activities are molded by spiritual understanding is exactly what Frank demands of all peoples — not in the promise of a heavenly reward, but because it, simply, is the best kind of life.

Frank scolds what he calls the "inertial" Jew: "To be a Jew, merely because I was born one," he says, "is shameful." He explains, "The Jews' 'homeland' for three millennia and more has been far less Palestine than the Abrahamic Covenant with God. He too is free to leave his 'homeland' (countless Jews have done it) by assimilation with other peoples. But so long as he continues to call himself a Jew, he carries his 'homeland' with him; and if he betrays it or fails to defend and nourish it, he will feel shame." I suspect that, although many other reasons were offered, the item of Frank's book that most dismayed Jewish critics was his insistence that Jews are different; that they must suffer; and that since they are going to have to suffer anyway, they should "suffer for a cause." He calls on every Jew to be a prophet and a martyr and Messiah — and if they can't be, to stand by those who are. This sounds like a strong order, unless one recalls that he makes a similar demand of every people, and Jews are outraged only because they have a tendency actually to do it!

Frank is obviously not a Zionist. He clearly sees the necessity of a national home for the Jews, but says, "it solves no essential problem for the Jews who cannot and do not wish to make Palestine their country."

Nevertheless, in the spring of 1956 he visited Israel, and at present he has a book in preparation about what he saw there. None need expect a great outcry of nationalism from him, however; he is interested in the survival of Israel equally for the benefit of Arabs whose conflict with Jews, he feels, distracts them from throwing off feudal backwardness. Israel, he feels, is an example of an enlightened modern state, and its very presence will provide an example for the oppressed peoples around it.\*

Through the 1940's and 1950's, Frank continued to develop a parallel treatment of the Person and the People. No other American writer has undergone so continuous and consistent an evolution. In his novel *The Invaders* he focused simultaneously on a New York struck by foreign attack and a household in New England invaded by hatred. In 1948 he was commissioned by the government of Venezuela to write the definitive biography of Simon Bolivar, and this offered him the opportunity to trace the career of a highly spiritual world figure and through it to symbolize the development of the most significant features of Latin American culture. *Birth of a World* shows Bolivar as a visionary who applied his mystic sense to the practical problems of creating a nation; mystic, not in the sense of the "intuitions" of Hitler, but rather in setting a high goal and resisting expediencies that would distract him from it. His shortcomings, and the shortcomings of his people, are reflected in the volatile nature of Latin American politics to this day.

Frank's most recent novel, *Not Heaven*, returns to the story-cycle form of *City Block*, but because it moves outside the unities of

time and space, and is organized rather on the consecutive development of its characters toward the state of being Persons, a careful reader can sense the strengthening and weakening of society through the activities of its constituents. In the long Prelude chapter, Frank explores the various heresies that could evolve from his philosophy and dramatically abjures the idea of a utopia. It is a powerful work; too powerful for a good many of the reviewers, for those who did not praise it were outraged by it.

Literary modernists as discerning as James Joyce, Sherwood Anderson, and Hart Crane respected Frank as one who had extended the boundaries of the novel and brought an inspired creativity to American letters. Crane said, in a letter to Allen Tate, "You may be indisposed to Waldo Frank, but I must recommend to you *City Block* as the richest in content of any 'fiction' that has appeared in the American 20th century. Frank has the real mystic's vision. His apprehensions astonish one." His saying "richest in content," and his quotation marks around "fiction" seem to indicate that Crane felt Frank's work was not conventional fiction, but an application of the form to a prophetic utterance.

Those who define the "Jewish novel" usually include all novels by Jews, or all novels about Jews; no one seems willing to limit the genre to novels that express Jewish ideals, for the list would be a good bit smaller. The modern novel is a machine-age adaptation of the pagan classic tragedy, its conventions set up to evoke sympathy for the heroic madness of those who pit themselves against the gods. Frank's work, and that of younger writers like Norman Mailer, Nelson Algren, J. D. Salinger are concerned with those who ally themselves with God — and by God they mean the spirit of unity in all things — to express the brotherhood of man. By using it for a Jewish purpose, they seem to have created a new kind of novel that could properly be called a Jewish literary form.

\* This observation is not from Mr. Frank's as yet uncompleted book, but from a conversation the writer had with him before he left for Israel. Undoubtedly his first-hand impressions will be more profound than those formed from hearsay, although this is not his first trip there. In 1925 he began his quest for the attributes of a "People" in Palestine, and throughout his studies of Hispanic culture he has traced the Hebraic contribution.



# Mesod, the Dyer of Barkaz

By MOSHE DLUZNOWSKY

AT DAWN Mesod the Dyer awakened, opened his tired eyes and for a moment looked at the greyish blueness outdoors which was hovering over the small window of his tiny room. He got off his bed, washed his hands and face and sat down to study the Biblical portion of the week.

A Bible with yellowing leaves was lying open. Mesod sat on his haunches and in a guttural, sighing voice intoned the words of the Pentateuch.

Mesod was swaying in the flickering light of the kerosene lamp on the table. His shadow danced on the wall. He was unable to collect his thoughts and recite the portion, as he had been doing every Friday. To his ears came the chant and the raw, sleepy voice of the muezzin, the Arab sexton, who stood on the minaret of the town's mosque turning to all four sides so that the wind might carry his call to all the faithful everywhere and rouse them for the first prayers of the day when Allah is asked to send comfort and healing to the sick and helpless who are being racked with pain in the mornings. Mesod was never disturbed by the chanting of the muezzin. But today it disturbed his thoughts and confused his studies.

Mesod looked around him. On mats that were strewn across the floor were sleeping his wife Beracha and a flock of boys and girls, their hands and feet intertwined.

His gaze fell upon his sleeping daughter Mazala. In the light of the lamp he looked into her face, sighed, drew out a letter from his pocket, held it between his shaky fingers and read:

To the scholar and householder Mesod Bengabar of the city of Barkaz:

Years ago I was in the town of Barkaz where I entered your home and saw your household. If my memory serves me, you have a grown-up girl fit to

be married and to bring a new generation into the world. Therefore I take the privilege of letting you know that in the forthcoming days there will depart from the town of Suz a son of a friend of mine who is a merchant of fruit, spices and tapestry. The son is going out into the world to study. I've asked him to visit your home and transmit our blessings. I ask you to befriend him and hope that in your home he will find his real mate.

Your humble friend, Joseph Medina

Mesod was so absorbed in his own thoughts that he did not hear his wife Beracha getting up from her bed. Beracha bent down over a pot filled with coal and with all her might blew into it in order to get it to burn, so that she might heat up some warm water for breakfast. Her thin body, wrapped in a crinkled dress with a handkerchief on her head, was bending on all sides. Smoke came up from the pot.

"Mesod, why do you sit and dream?" asked Beracha and coughed. "Today is Friday, isn't it? So we must prepare for the market the colored cloths and kerchiefs. Lame Mustafah is coming today from Magazan to take the cloth. You're burning oil needlessly. You sit and meditate and there isn't a bit of bread or a drop of tea in the house. Today is the eve of Sabbath and we need a little money to buy 'kuzkuz' and at least a few loaves of bread."

"Yes, Beracha, you're right. Right away. I'll start to work."

He hid the letter, closed the Bible and went to get his painter's tools, which consisted of two big pots and a few dishes for washing cloth. A damp smell issued from all of them. The poverty of the poor artisan cried out from every corner.

\* \* \*

The early morning blueness vanished. Bright daylight appeared in the town of Barkaz, Morocco. From all the crooked

streets, from old, half-ruined houses, out came bent figures clad in torn, dirty abayas. Upon their heads towered whitish turbans. Shuffling along in their torn shoes, they were hurrying to the open doors of the mosque for the morning prayer.

Other women and men were hurrying to work. Here an Arab loaded the donkey with sacks of fruit and went forth to trade. Another Arab at a well filled his two ewers with water, threw them over his shoulders and in a monotonous voice began peddling his fresh water. A sleepy camel-driver swayed on the hump of a camel which with majestic strides was twisting and winding around the narrow, crooked streets on his way to the open field.

Jews came out of their cramped homes. A respectable householder, garbed in his long, fluttering attire, wearing a small, black, roundish cap, his feet in woven sandals, was walking with a "tallith-bag" under his arm toward the nearest synagogue for morning prayers. From a corner of the street there came out the blacksmith Jacob Gabuz, an iron bar swinging from his half-bent shoulders. He was hurrying to his blacksmith shop to earn his daily sustenance, and perhaps too, if the Lord will be good to him, he might also be able to earn something for the Sabbath.

Chaim Bensusan the tailor, with a piece of cloth strung over his shoulders, was on his way to his tiny tailoring shop. He entered the shop, spread out his legs, started working on a suit for an Arab householder and hummed a tune.

By this time the town was wide awake. The tiny shops in the holes of walls opened up with a colorful display of all sorts of goods, as at a bazaar. The Arab shop owner sat down on his haunches outside near the entrance, hummed a tune and lazily, aimlessly looked around him. His Jewish neighbor sat at the threshold of his own shop, looked into a sacred book or spread out the goods before the eyes of the passers-by and waited for a customer.

On a lame donkey Mesod the Dyer loaded a basket with colored wool and thread.

Walking on one side and his wife Beracha on the other side of the donkey, they went out into the market.

The day was a hot one. In the marketplace people were trading and shouting at the top of their lungs. White-robed Arabs loitered around the marketplace with feverish eyes, handled the goods, haggled over prices and bought nothing. An old, grey-bearded Arab accompanied a monotonous melody upon a wooden instrument. Jews cried out their wares, praised their fruit, which was rotting, and the fish over which swarms of flies were hovering. An Arab scribe on a small bench was writing with a goose feather letters and addresses for a dozen women. In the center of the market an Arab with a shaved head was pulling snakes out of a basket, while another was playing upon a whistle and the crowd surrounding them was enjoying itself.

Mesod and his wife Beracha called out their goods:

"Grey cloths for an abaya, fit to be worn by an effendi! Red, green, yellow wool thread for weaving bonnets for the most beautiful women of Barkaz. Blue cloth for making pantaloons for the Romadan holiday."

Mesod wasn't listening to the words which came out of his own mouth. His head was awl. He was thinking of his unhappy daughter Mazala, of the letter in which he was told that perhaps the right husband will come to her. Over and over he tried to figure out the distance from the town of Suz to Barkaz. The guest may arrive even today before Sabbath eve. In him was the stifled cry of a poor, persecuted man. He decided that as soon as he would earn his day's sustenance he would go to the "Ohel" of the holy saints and pray to God that his daughter might find favor in the eyes of the guest. Perhaps, who knows . . .

Beracha disturbed his thoughts:

"What ails you today, Mesod? Your head is somewhere far away. Rather see that we should earn a little money. The Sabbath will arrive and we may not have enough coins to

buy enough bread, fish and tea. And we've got to buy shirts for the children."

"What shall I do?" Mesod's eyes turned upward to heaven. "I cry out my goods, but the buyers don't show up. Soon Mazala will come out with Nessim and they'll help out. Perhaps?"

Beracha sighed, drew the kerchief over her head and in a despairing voice said:

"Mazala cried again when she awakened today, and yelled that she is afraid. She tore her hair. What will become of our daughter? She's getting on in years."

"She's now more than seventeen," Mesod lamented. "Were it not for that calamity, she would have been married already. Maybe God will finally take pity upon us?"

"Why do you think that God will suddenly take pity upon us, hear our prayer?" asked Beracha.

Mesod scratched his little beard, raised his eyes heavenwards, but said nothing about the letter.

In the center of the market Jews in guttural voices sang out the praises of their goods. Fishermen praised their fish and the spice merchant his spices. Fruit dealers sang:

"Dates that drip with honey, prunes full of juices, apples that nourish the body."

Arab peasants were swaying upon lean and fat donkeys, pushing their way through the marketplace. Behind them walked their veiled women. Their dark eyes looked out from the veils, peering curiously at everything around them.

Reb Halifa, the Rabbi was hurrying to the ritual baths. His tall form wrapped in a long grey abaya, a red kerchief binding his head was walking with rapid strides. He took a sniff of tobacco, sneezed and thought of the pleasure awaiting him in the steam bath.

To Mesod's corner in the market there came a young girl. Her thin body swayed. Over her neck and forehead flew waves of black hair, circling in disarrayed locks. Her face was pale and thin and from her dark skin looked out eyes deep, dark and full of sadness. She wore a short dress and torn sandals around her feet. By her side ran

Nessim, her little brother, barefoot and in torn trousers. His hungry little eyes searched all around. He was dying to taste the delicacies of the market place. He ran up to his parents:

"I want bread, an apple."

"You'll get everything, Nessim. Everything will be on the table tonight."

Silently the girl stood near Mesod and his Beracha. She started taking the goods out of the containers, patted the donkey and then remained standing in a daze with lowered head.

A stout Arab accompanied by his veiled women-folk approached the dyer, greeted him and began to look over the colored cloths and the woolen threads.

"From this thread you can weave clothes for your household," Mesod and Beracha together started praising their wares. "From the cloth you can clothe your household so beautifully that all strangers' eyes would be mirrored in them when they appear in the street."

"You've got a clever tongue," the Arab laughed, "a sharp tongue, but an honest one. You're also my neighbor. So it was fated that I should buy from you today."

The Arab bought up the remnants of the colored goods, bargaining for them until both parties were satisfied. When the Arab went away Mesod left the donkey with the containers to his wife and children and said that he was going to the baths in honor of the Sabbath. He started walking to the outskirts of town to the chapel where lay the remains of the saints of Barkaz. There he went to cry out his sorrow, as well as to thank the Lord for having brought him some earning this day.

"Mama, Mama!"

"What is it, my daughter Mazala?"

The girl stuttered. It was difficult for her to bring a word out of her mouth. Her face became reddened. Barely was she able to utter:

"I dreamt of a snake with the head of a fish and the feet of a donkey."

"At home you'll take a bit of soot, pour

vinegar upon it and spit," her mother said to quiet her.

"I . . . I'm afraid, Mother. Everyone's looking at me. Ephraim the blacksmith is laughing . . . The hook-nosed Ali beats me."

"The Lord will help you, have no fear," her mother comforted her. "Your father will pray for you. No one will beat you . . ."

The girl stood exhausted. Her black eyes looked around with fear, sought protection and escape. The mother and the boy picked up the rags, while the mother murmured:

"Mazala, Mazala! To think what has become of you!"

The yells of the market criers became louder. Beracha counted the little money she had earned and said:

"I'll run over to buy up things for the Sabbath."

The boy sprang up:

"Mama, I want to go with you!"

"No, stay here with Mazala. I'll be back soon."

\* \* \*

Mazala was one of the prettiest girls in the mellah, the Jewish quarter of Barkaz, and a pious and well-mannered child as well. The young men of the town thought about her, yearned for her. Mothers would bless their children that they might have the charm of little Mazala, while evil-minded people were envious of the painter and his wife because of the precious treasure the Lord had bestowed upon them.

Mazala was also a lively girl who laughed much and danced. A wild joy cried out of her body.

"Why do you laugh and jump so like a wild horse?" her mother would chastise her.

"I feel good. I must."

"Help your father around the pots, help him boil the dyes."

"Father is always sad, growls. His hands are smeared."

"You're now a girl well along in year."

In appearance she seemed like a child of the Atlas Mountains, brown-skinned, agile, delicate limbs, and eyes reflecting the storms of the desert and the coolness of the bare

hills. Her parents watched her every step, fearing the Evil Eye.

She was then in her fifteenth year.

Once there came to the dyer an Arab from a neighboring village bringing some cloth to be dyed. Together with him came a son of his, a very tall and sturdy young man. He saw Mazala helping her father at his work, singing and laughing at the same time. He saw her girlish charm, and couldn't take his eyes off her.

Some time later the son himself came to take the goods. Mesod filled the sack and gave it to him.

"Why, we brought much more wool and cotton," the young man cried.

"This is all you brought me," said Mesod. "There wasn't even one thread more."

"You're lying, thieving Jew," the young man roared. "You want to take from a poor Arab all his hard-earned possessions. I'll show you!"

After a few more words between them a fist-fight broke out. Like a flash it spread through the crooked alleys of the mellah. The lazy Arabs who had been sitting in the coffee-houses drinking green tea, smoking nargiles and humming tunes, suddenly awakened from their sleep, ran out with clenched fists and yells:

"Jews are robbing God-fearing Arabs who fast during the Ramadan days. The Jews are taking away all our possessions. They covet our women, take the bread out of our mouths!"

The fight lasted several hours. There were bloody, battered bodies on both sides. During the fight Mazala disappeared. A crowd of Jewish young men went out to look for her. On the third day she was found full of pain and despondency somewhere in a rock cave of the Atlas Mountains.

The delicate Mazala fell into a deep melancholy. Her dark eyes lost their glitter, her lips became pale, her graceful body shrunken. She became fearful of every shadow and for days would not utter a word . . .

Sadness and sorrow entered the house of the poor family of Mesod Bengabor.



"Who will now want to become engaged to such a girl?" lamented the father. "What Jewish young man will want to tie himself to her?"

The mother wept quietly and murmured: "Mazala, Mazala, what has become of you?"

\* \* \*

The half-blind sexton Naphtali poured oil into the basins holding the burning lamps of the Eternal Light, straightened the wicks with his shaky fingers and turning to the corner where Mesod was standing said:

"What brought you here today to the 'Ohel' of the saints, Mesod? Haven't you cried your heart out enough because of the calamity that befell you?"

"My heart can't quiet down, Naphtali. The Lord is testing his poor servant Mesod, beats him and pats him, tortures him and comforts him. I've come to pour out my troubles, find some comfort perhaps."

"May help come down to you from heaven."

The chapel, a little hut, stands in the middle of a field among humpy hillocks. Inside burn the oil basins and over them are letters with the names of the saints that lived in the Moroccan town of Barkaz, and had done much good during their lifetime, had performed miracles and been a comfort and salvation to the Jews of those days. . . . To this chapel, "Ohel," on the outskirts of town there came Jews and Jewesses, the sick and the hale, old and young, all sorts of cripples, and beggars, and even the well-fed and prominent people.

A blind Jew holding a Meyer Baal Hanes box in which coins are dropped, was shaking it and asking coins of the sick and the healthy who had come from all over Morocco to pray at the graves, some for a livelihood, some for health, some for a bit of happiness. Mesod stood near the Eternal Light. His lips uttered a prayer. He was praying for his daughter Mazala.

It was getting late. Jews were preparing to walk back to town. The blind sexton put aside the box with the coins. The psalm-chanters uttered their last sentences. Mesod

didn't move a single step. Naphtali put his hands upon his shoulders and said:

"Mesod, the Sabbath is coming down upon the earth. Enough of sorrowing. Go home to your household. May your heart become filled with hope, like a bottle filled with sweet spring water."

As from a deep sleep Mesod roused himself. He kept cracking the fingers of his hands, murmured thanks to Naphtali, piously read the names of the saints over the oil lamps and went out of the chapel.

\* \* \*

A thick fog of steam filled the room where Mesod, half-naked, was working at seething cauldron which with its thick, foaming blackness was threatening to swallow up the lean dyer and everything around him. Flames burst forth from under the vessels. In a corner stood Beracha, bent over a big tub and washing some things. Her bony hands kept deftly rubbing over a board. She sighed, rinsed the water from the cloths and threw them over to Mesod. From his hands they swiftly flew into the seething cauldron.

"Is this the house of the wise man and householder, Mesod Bengabar?"

Upon hearing a voice, Mesod swiftly turned around and through the thick, steamy fog noticed a man standing by the door.

"Yes, this is Mesod the Dyer."

"Your friend, Yosef Medina from the town of Suz, asked me to go out of my way, which leads to the great city of Fez, and stop over in Barkaz to bring you regards, to inquire of your health and the health of your household."

"Oh, from Suz!" Mesod interrupted the stranger. "Shalom Aleichem! Baruch Haba!" Peace be with you, my friend and guest. Why do you stand by the door? Come into the house."

"Beracha, bring a basin of water. Our friend will wash from his feet the dust of the journey!"

Mesod crept away from the pots, from the thick steam. He went to the door to meet the guest and suddenly stood still.

Only now, by the light of the outdoors, did he see the man; A dark little beard rimmed a young delicate face. From above the breast of the young man and from the shoulders rose two humps which the broad abaya had for a moment hidden from Mesod's eyes. In one hand the man carried a fully loaded sack, and in the other a cane.

Mesod's lean body twisted, his feet wobbled. He began to stammer:

"My friend, Yosef Medina, whom I haven't seen several years wrote me that you would be here. He asked me to receive you well. You . . . will be my guest. Today is only Wednesday. But you will remain in our home until over the Sabbath."

"If such is the will of my master Mesod, I will surely remain," said the stranger and his pale face with the flashing eyes looked around the dye works.

Poor Mesod understood everything. But what should one do now? How does one acquaint Mazala with such a person? Who knows? Perhaps it is so fated. Perhaps it is written in heaven that these two unhappy ones should be united? Oh, Lord, why do you punish your poor servant?"

"What is your name? I forgot to ask."

"Simeon Barani."

Mesod led the guest into his house. Simeon put down the sack, dusted off his clothes, stroked his beard and sat down by the table. From a drawer Mesod took out a white tablecloth which he spread over the table while his hands were shaking and his heart was pounding. Simeon Barani noticed the girl Mazala. She was standing in a corner of the room and eyeing him with curiosity. Their eyes met. The colors on her face quickly turned from red to pale, from pale to red again. Her eyes became livelier, larger. Simeon's eyes glowed with an unearthly flame, his lips became pale.

He opened his sack, took out a colored silken shawl, gold-braided sandals, a pair of trousers for Mesod, a silver-wrought bracelet for Beracha. He put all these things on the table and murmured:

"It's customary that when a guest comes he brings gifts. Here are my gifts."

The young man remained over the Sabbath in Mesod's home. During those few days Mazala's face became lighter, her eyes more gleaming, her lips fuller. Slyly she threw glances in Simeon's direction.

One day after the Sabbath Simeon Barani said to the dyer:

"I left my prosperous, happy home in order to come to a great city to acquire knowledge as well as ability and wisdom of conducting business. My father is rich and prominent. Our friend Yosef Medina asked me to stop in Barkaz. I listened to him. I'm not sorry I went out of my way. I've seen you daughter and, if it will be your will and her will, I should like to marry her."

Mesod swayed and barely stammered out: "She is a cripple. Her mind is affected. Her language is unclear . . ."

"I too have been punished, am a cripple from the day of my birth."

Mesod spread out his hands like wings and, pointing to his household effects, continued:

"This is all I own. We are very poor, have barely enough for a day. Mazala has no proper dress to cover her body, no shoes for her feet."

Simeon Barani again stroked his beard and said calmly:

"My father will give me enough for a livelihood and for other expenses until I will become self-supporting."

Mesod's thoughts were perplexed. He was like one who stood upon two scales. He said slowly:

"Listen, my friend. I am an honest artisan. I've never fooled anyone, never sought to rob one of even a penny. I must therefore reveal something to you. A great calamity has befallen my daughter. She has been defiled. A hot-headed Arab youth abducted and defiled her. Young and old in Barkaz know it."

Simeon's head lowered. His voice quivered as he said:

"I've already heard of that. It was brought to me here in town with all the details. I must therefore also tell you what's pressing on my heart. My father had no children

from his first wife, surely that must have been God's will. He therefore took in an Arab concubine, another wife, who gave birth to me . . ."

Mesod shuddered. There were already too many blows for his pain-wracked body. Why is the Lord testing him so much? Or is it simply the play of fate? He wanted to withhold his words, but couldn't:

"Then you are . . . you are not a Jew, Simeon?"

"I am a Jew. My mother embraced Judaism and brought me up as a Jew. In our district, deeper in the mountains, that often happens. Everyone in my town of Suz, young and old, knows of this. I can bring the proper witnesses."

"I don't need witnesses, Simeon," said Mesod in a choking voice. "I want you to tell me openly—if, for instance, it weren't as you've told me, would you also have insisted upon marrying Mazala?"

Simeon Barani didn't stop to think for a moment. He said firmly:

"She is my intended one from heaven."

Mesod yielded:

"It seems then that thus it must be. Take the gifts, Simeon, and give them to Mazala. Perhaps she'll become well again."

Mesod went out. His heart was bleeding. He didn't know whether to cry or rejoice. He met his wife standing bent over the wash-tub. He told her the news.

"Mazala has found her intended one."

"Simeon!"

"Yes, Simeon from the town of Suz."

Beracha straightened her tired body, shook her head and spoke to herself and to none else:

"At last. Happiness for my child. Came from a far city. Oh, woe is me, woe is me. My Mazala, the prettiest girl in Barkaz. A man with two humps. A match sent from heaven . . ."

That same afternoon Mesod went to the chapel of the Barkaz saints. He didn't know for certain whether to give thanks for that

which happened to his daughter Mazala or whether to make complaint for the blows which had befallen upon his battered body, blows one worse than the other, sudden, bitter blows that kept raining upon him endlessly.

## NOVEMBER ETCHING

By LOUISE HAJEK

Where pines bayonet the lowering sky  
The scattered shards of summer lie;  
A plume of seaweed, torn and frail,  
Driftwood, shells, a shiny pail.  
Remnants of carefree hours spun  
On the golden wheel of a smiling sun.  
The cold lake mutes its jovial roar  
And shudders away from the empty shore,  
While the piercing clamor of the loon  
Splinters the silence of the dune.

## SADNESS

By HAROLD HEIFETZ

Death and I are not on speaking terms,  
no friend  
holding space  
in my allotment of dreams,  
no torn  
bleeding  
animal of sympathy,  
creeping silently  
over the unknown north woods.

Death and I are not on speaking terms  
until that moment of necessity  
when my lips become weak  
searching for water in my mouth,  
and my fingers  
can no longer tighten over love.

Until that tired moment,  
I write my poem  
dedicated to that black bird  
with scarlet pollen on its feet,  
carrying sadness under its wings.

# The Black Jews of Harlem

By ARNOLD SHERMAN

BESIDES BEING a focal point for one of America's largest concentrations of Negroes, Lenox avenue at 128th street in Harlem is the site of the chief synagogue of the Royal Order of Ethiopian Hebrews. The converted tenement housing the synagogue is a corner building located directly above a drug store on one side and a liquor store on the other. Its painted windows are decorated with joined hands, the centers of which are composed of eyes, and are enclosed by blue-bordered stars of David. An old sign attached to an inner wall with scotch tape warns, "This is a hallway, not a toilet," and an arrow instructs visitors that the headquarters of America's black Jews are one flight above.

The synagogue occupies a large room on the first floor that includes many of the conventional symbols of religious Jewry. The door posts contain "mezzuzahs," a blue-draped, Hebrew-inscribed pulpit faces long rows of benches comprising the pews, and the room is dominated by a richly ornated closet in which the "torahs" are kept. In contrast to these religious symbols, however, are the less conventional and more indigenous examples of black Jewry. A portrait of Haile Selassie hangs opposite an Ethiopian flag and a piano in the corner of the room is littered with a number of old Christian psalm books.

At about ten each Saturday morning, families of well-dressed, solemn-faced Negroes appear at the door of the synagogue, dutifully touch their hands to the "mezzuzah" and take their places in the pews. The men all wear hats and a number of the "elders" are identified by their long, impressive grey beards.

Numbering in the congregation are sev-

eral white people, all of whom are guests. One visitor, a Rabbi from France, engages a young, black Jewish scholar in conversation. "Do you have the same faith as the white Jews?" the Rabbi asks.

"Yes," the boy nods solemnly. "We study the Torah and we observe the Sabbath and all the important holidays."

"And do you understand Hebrew?"

"A little."

"Who taught you?"

"Our Rabbi."

"Do you believe that you are Jews by birth or by conversion?" asks the Rabbi.

"We are Jews by birth," the other states emphatically. "Our Rabbi has taught us that. We are the descendants of the Falashas, and they are the real Jews."

"What of the white Jews? Are they not real?"

"Perhaps some. But they have been living in Europe for a long time. They are mixed up. The black Jew is pure."

By eleven the synagogue contains seventy people. Most of the worshippers are women and although the first pew is reserved for pre-Bar Mitzvah youths, there is a noticeable absence of youngsters. In a tiny enclave, towards the left side of the room are the Seminararians, the future Rabbis of black Jewry.

Brother Ralph, a handsome, soft spoken Negro who attends City College and the organization's Rabbinical Seminary simultaneously, volunteers the following information; "What we are doing is unique. For thousands of years our ancestors have permitted themselves to be drawn into religions that were foreign and alien to them. For this they suffered. But now our people are beginning to reawaken and understand that



Judaism is not only their privilege but their birthright. Up until five years ago I was a Baptist but I was a dissatisfied Christian. After all, what had Christianity done for my people? Then one day I heard about Rabbi Matthew and the missionary work he was doing in Harlem. I came to one of his services purely out of curiosity but when I heard the Rabbi deliver his sermon I knew that Judaism was to play an important part in my life. I've never regretted my conversion. I've even induced my mother and uncle to convert also. The happiest moment of my life will be when I'm ordained and I can continue the great work that our Rabbi has begun."

Unlike many other Sabbath observers, the black Jews reflect the happiness and joy of the occasion. They appear calm and pleased, genuinely happy to be taking part in the activities of the day. A young Negress who identifies herself as Sister Mary explains shyly, "All week long we look forward to the Sabbath. It is a day of holiness and rejoicing for us. It is the day we give ourselves completely to God. After we finish services, many of us remain in the synagogue and discuss our family problems with the Rabbi. He is always sympathetic and tries to show us the answer to our problems from Scriptures. It may seem strange to you, but after spending a half hour with the Rabbi, I always feel happier and richer. The only thing I'm sorry about is that I'm not a man. If I were, I would become a Rabbi like our teacher. That is the greatest vocation a human can aspire to."

When Rabbi Matthew is seen entering the synagogue from his office to the rear of the floor, an air of expectant silence prevails. He moves quickly past the congregants, not pausing to greet individual members until after he ascends to the pulpit. Finally, standing with his back to the Ark, he nods to the congregation and crisply announces in a deep bass voice, "Now we shall begin the prayers."

No other man is as much responsible for the rise of American black Jewry as is Rabbi Matthew and no other man exerts as much

influence over its members as does he. Born in the West Indies and claiming descent from Falasha ancestors, he became an early resident of Harlem. For several years he studied in the now defunct Haydn Seminary which catered to students of every monotheistic learning. (The purpose of the school was to produce ministers although it never particularly avowed any preference for the type of ministers it was graduating. Courses were conducted on the broadest levels of religious training.) While most of the students eventually drifted into Protestant denominations, Rabbi Matthew chose for himself the mission of establishing an order of black Jews in America. His efforts were phenomenally successful and after four decades of missionary activities, he can count many thousands of supporters.

Physically, the chief Rabbi of black Jewry more closely resembles a pugilist than a clergyman. He is powerfully and compactly built and his vitriolic temper is one of his almost legendary characteristics. Brushing away criticism both from Jewish and non-Jewish circles, he has emerged fierce, suspicious but otherwise unscathed from his many encounters with antagonists. Perhaps nowhere else in Judaism is one single man venerated as is he by his congregation. To his supporters, Rabbi Matthew is not merely a clergyman but a composite of prophet, magician and Saint.

Standing on the pulpit, Rabbi Matthew inserts his thumb into a Hebrew prayer book and nods to an approaching elderly woman whose hat is covered with artificial roses and who takes her place at the piano.

The recitations are both unusual and unorthodox. Rabbi Matthew arbitrarily excludes prayers that are normally recited and includes liturgies that are specifically reserved for holidays. The language of prayer varies from Hebrew to English and is intermittently interrupted by the sound of the piano accompaniment playing extracts from such varied melodies as "Adon Olom," "Ein Kalohenu," and "Jesus Loves Us."

Readings are led by the Rabbi himself. His Hebrew is confused, muddled and often

impossible to understand. He resorts to a strange synthesis of Ashkenazic and Sephardic pronunciations which is made even more unintelligible by his thick accent. Through some tractates his reading is labored and incorrect but nonetheless the services manage to proceed smoothly.

A minor incident occurs when two of the youngest worshippers begin fidgeting and whispering amongst each other. Suddenly, Rabbi Matthew raises his hands and roars for silence. He descends from the pulpit and wordlessly fixes his gaze on the offenders. One of the boys begins to whimper and the other hides his face in his mother's coat. The Rabbi turns and resumes the service.

The highlight of every Sabbath is the Rabbi's sermon. During those hour-long interludes the philosophical basis for the community is explored and more often than not the relationship of black Jews to their white co-religionists is thoroughly aired before the worshippers.

"Who are the real Jews?" Rabbi Matthew booms to his attentive audience. "Are they the white or are they the blacks? The Bible tells us that the chosen people were a nation without blemish. We are a people without blemish. What has happened in the two thousand years since the white Jews were set adrift? I'll tell you, they have assimilated the ways of the Gentiles. They have intermarried and like Esau, have sold their birthright for a little material gain. But what of the black Jews, has it been the same for them? The answer is no. The black Jews, the descendants of Solomon and Sheba have been living in Ethiopia for thousands of years. They have remained steadfast. They have continued to believe in God's covenant with them. They have not forgotten their great mission.

"Now the whites will tell you, as they have always told you, that we are to be cheated out of our birthright. But this is something we will never permit. That is something we will never sell. The whites have tried to make animals out of us because of our color and they do this because they fear that we shall rise to claim what is ours.

Well, their efforts have been in vain. We are the sons of Solomon and no one shall tell us differently."

Instantly, the worshippers break in with a frantic chorus of "Hallelujahs." "We are the chosen people," they sing. "Hallelujah, amen."

Rabbi Matthew signals the pianist to begin playing the traditional Hebrew melody, "Adon Olom" and soon the entire congregation bursts into an enthusiastic handclapping, singing accompaniment.

While black Jewry is comparatively new to the American scene, there are many precedents for them in history. Falasha traditions, from the interior of Ethiopia, relate that Menelik, the son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, was exiled to his mother's homeland because of rivalry among the king's other sons. Legend has it that he returned to Ethiopia with a large retinue of servants and collaborators and that the Falashas are the descendants of those emigrants.

Another explanation about the presence of black Jews is that Jewish colonists and traders settled on the borders of Ethiopia in pre-Christian times, but due to persecution were forced to flee into the interior of the country where thousands of years of isolation, conversion and intermarriage produced the Falashas.

Of course, there are those scholars who insist that the black Jew is the descendant of the ten lost tribes of Israel but little credence is given this last theory.

Whichever view is correct, however, there is enough evidence to document the presence of Judaism in Ethiopia for over two thousand years. It is on this fact that Rabbi Matthew trades heavily for increased membership.

One bit of Negro rivalry that makes Rabbi Matthew's missionary activities easier is the esteem in which the Ethiopians are held by other black races. They occupy a unique and somewhat elite position in the annals of Negro folklore and tradition. Ethiopia's long history of sovereignty, its association with and acceptance by international powers, and the aloofness the Ethiopians preserve toward

the Negroes of other nations, contribute to this aura of superiority. It has even been suggested that the Ethiopians if they are not racially indigenous, are at least the descendants of white stock and that they occupy somewhat of the same racial position as do the Aryan tribes of India. Thus Rabbi Matthew's technically untenable assertion that Judaism and Ethiopianism are identifiable and that Negroes by accepting Judaism are associated with the natural leaders of their race, has been an appealing suggestion for thousands of his supporters.

The members of the "Royal Order" are for the most part recent converts. The peculiarity of their status, unrecognized by white Jews and despised by other Negro denominations, has made for an interesting social structure amongst them. The Harlem Jew is a pariah and increasingly his activities have become more withdrawn and more dedicated to the members of his new religion. Most of the congregants know each other intimately. Their ambitions and problems are freely discussed and analyzed during frequent group meetings and of course the final arbiter of all their plans is the Rabbi. There is little question about the sincerity of their belief. They accept and identify themselves with Judaism as only converts can.

Educationally, the Harlem Jew is the superior of most of his Gentile neighbors. Surprisingly, a large number of Rabbi Matthew's supporters have attended colleges and other secondary schools. Drinking in an area that is infamous for its wide distribution of alcohol, is officially frowned upon and most of the black Jews content themselves exclusively with a cup of Sabbath wine. There are few professionals amongst the Harlem Jews and most of their supporters are recruited from the ranks of tradespeople and skilled craftsmen.

As the absolute spiritual leader of the "Royal Order of Ethiopian Hebrew," Rabbi Matthew has encouraged a variety of Judaism that while similar to the parent body in dogma, differs radically in practice and technique. Black Jews, for example, are obliged

to wear hats in the synagogue and frequently demonstrate their religious zeal by growing beards. They are required to abide by "Kashruth" laws (although few outside of the clergy are in a position to do so), and they observe the restrictions associated with major Jewish holidays and fasts.

Yet, contrary to current Jewish thought, a misplaced emphasis is put on mysticism and although Rabbi Matthew displays a pathetic ignorance of the esoteric Kabbalah and Zohar, he relies heavily on them in his teachings. He scarcely ever refers to a single tractate, however, and the source for his mystic conclusions remain frequently nebulous. A firm believer in Divine revelation, many of his claims are said to have been endowed angelically.

One evening, after Friday night services had concluded, Rabbi Matthew turned to the dozen worshippers in the audience and began speaking on the familiar theme of persecution.

"Brother William," he pointed to a small Negro in the first row, "will you stand and witness for me that when I passed the Baptist church on Lenox avenue and the Baptists tried to stone me, I waved my hand and I became invisible?"

"Yes, you did," corroborated Brother William. "I saw you disappear with my own eyes."

Immediately, the rest of the worshippers (all women) rose from their seats and shouted ecstatically, "Hallelujah, the Lord loves our teacher."

"Let us sing 'Adon Olom,'" the Rabbi roared. "Let us sing so that all our enemies will know that we are the chosen sons and daughters of Jehova."

Whatever its true relationship to Judaism is, unquestionably, Rabbi Matthew has engineered a unique and multi-functioned organization into existence. His "Royal Order" boasts of synagogues located throughout the country and the Harlem congregation alone, over which Rabbi Matthew presides, is alleged to have three thousand supporters. There are lodges and black Jewish associations in Chicago, Philadelphia, throughout

the metropolitan area of New York, in most southern cities with large Negro populations as well as on the West coast, in the Virgin Islands and in the West Indies. Their unconfirmed figures indicate that there are at least thirty thousand Negroes actively enrolled in the association and that upward of a hundred thousand Negroes are indirectly connected with the movement. The accuracy of these figures are difficult to check but it is beyond dispute that there are at least several thousand active members registered in the "Order."

The heaviest concentration of black Jews is in New York. In addition to the Harlem congregation there are a number of nearby, smaller groups, most of which are under Rabbi Matthew's auspices. Several of his Seminary graduates, however, no longer content to remain under the shadow of their powerful and dogmatic leader rebelled against his authority and elected to organize into splinter groups. For all intents and purposes, however, they are ineffectual.

The closest associate of Rabbi Matthew is Rabbi Small, a man whose dimensions are in perfect accord with his name. Rabbi Small is the leader of a small Brooklyn congregation and counts the patronage of about a hundred supporters. Like his superior, he is optimistic about the future. "We are a powerful force," he maintains, "because our message is truth. We are reviving the faith of the Negro in himself and in the God he lost but which he is every day regaining. Perhaps in our lifetimes we shall see the Negro people rise up like one man and recite the "Shema Yisroel."

A serious cause of antagonism between the black chief Rabbi and white Jews has been the fact that Jewish organizations persistently, after having carefully investigated Rabbi Matthew's assertion of Judaism and while not denying his own prodigious efforts, concluded that there is no basis for the presumption that the American Negroes are Falashas.

Realizing the prestige and benefits that might result from white Jewish support and recognition, Rabbi Matthew has been in

touch with a variety of leading Jewish organizations and personalities. Professor Jacques Faitlovitch, the most prominent authority on the Falashas and the man who more than any other helped to reawaken the Jewish people to an awareness of their Ethiopian cousins, emphatically denied Rabbi Matthew's ethnic claim. Another blow fell when the American Jewish Council of Rabbis, unable to accept the authenticity of his ordainment, withheld his much wanted recognition. It is interesting to note that Rabbi Matthew claims his ordainment as the result of Ethiopian birthright. Yet the origin of the Falashas preceded the later, talmudical custom of ordainment and there has never been an equivalent of a Rabbi in Ethiopia. Finally, the Jewish Welfare Agency, when petitioned for help informed the Rabbi that it would comply with his request only if he would permit competent instructors and observers to assist in the affairs of the community.

To this suggestion, Rabbi Matthew, who does not try to disguise the jealousy in which he regards his dominant and absolute position retorted angrily. "Do they think I'm a child? Do they think that after a lifetime of struggling, I'll permit strangers to replace me? It will never happen. I can assure them of that. I am the chief Rabbi of the black Jews, I and no one else."

The group's attitude to Zionism is an ambiguous one. A handful of younger members succeeded in emigrating to Israel but for the most part, and due to the encouragement of their Rabbi, members are apathetic about the new state. As in all other cases, Rabbi Matthew who is loath to share his authority or fall under too much scrutinization, discourages any rapprochement of black and white Jews except those that are made on his own terms. A vague interest dominates the thoughts of some of the more youthful members in relation to Israel but if this interest is not entirely stifled it is certainly not encouraged.

Aware of the sensitive position of his organization, Rabbi Matthew has mapped out a plan of independence for his group.



A community near Babylon, Long Island, was founded some years back and although the village of black Jews is scarcely more than a sparse collection of houses surrounded by a few acres of soil, the "Royal Order" takes great pride in its accomplishment. Eventually, they intend to expand into an autonomous, little village that will act as a model community for black Jews throughout the world.

The main synagogue in Harlem is also the site of the Old Age Home. Several old ladies are boarded and fed in tiny apartments on the second floor of the tenement. One such charity case remarked, "Our Rabbi is a Saint. If not for him, we would be on the street. Jews take care of their needy. It says so in the Bible. We study and pray all day. Now that we're Jews we're not afraid of dying anymore. We will go to Heaven."

Although Rabbi Matthew insists that parents send their pre-Bar Mitzvah boys to the Hebrew school that he conducts several times each week, there is a marked shortage of youngsters in attendance. Classes are conducted in the Hebrew language, in Jewish rituals, and in the Kabbalah. It is in the latter that Rabbi Matthew evokes the most interest, appealing not only to the young, but to every age group. Everyone wants to know the incantations that will enable them to become invisible, to curse their enemies into inanimation, to relieve their families of illness or to be transported, as Rabbi Matthew claims he once was, "to Chicago on a cloud." The black Rabbi is very careful about his "zoharic" secrets, however, and while the uninitiated may taste the fruits of the mystery, the real formulas are reserved for the clergy.

At different but ill-fated intervals the "Order" has attempted to expand their Hebrew school and Seminary into classes for "shochets" and "cantors." Rabbi Matthew himself conducted classes in the two ancient Jewish rites but instructions were finally suspended when graduates of the cantorial school turned from liturgy to jazz and the community's new "shochets" left Judaism

for profitable butchering careers in other parts of the city.

The "Royal Order" is financed through the voluntary contributions of its own members and from funds solicited from individual, sympathetic white Jews. The organization's ambitious plans for the future include an expansion of the Babylon community, increased missionary activities, and the purchase of a new building. While discussing plans for the still hypothetical new black Jewish center, Rabbi Matthew's face loses its forced rigidity and relaxes. "It will be in the center of Harlem," he announces, "and there will be a kosher butcher shop in the rear. The synagogue will accommodate twice the number of people the present one can hold and we will have a large kitchen that will serve coffee and bread and butter to the needy. In the basement, in order to attract the boys off the streets, we will have bowling alleys and an ice cream parlor."

The progress or decline of black Judaism in America largely depends upon Rabbi Matthew's willingness to eventually compromise his position of absolute power. Even now, his organization is largely dependent upon the support that is tendered by sympathetic, white Jews. It is unrealistic to assume that black Judaism can expand or even eventually survive without support and recognition, and welfare organizations have voiced their reluctance to assist the Harlem group until their practices and philosophy are more in accord with modern Judaism. Also, Rabbi Matthew is no longer a young man and he himself has confessed that there is no one in his self-appointed hierarchy that can easily replace him. The old, dogmatic Kabbalist is faced with the question of whether or not assistance is worth the price of reform and compromise. In his own words, however, he maintains, "No matter what happens black Jews are here to stay. We will continue to grow because we are the favored of God. We are his chosen people and as long as we continue to believe and as long as we identify ourselves with the great Jewish cause, we will be preserved."

# Immigration, Life Blood of Israel

By GIDEON DEAN

**I**MMIGRATION is the life blood of the State of Israel. It is the toughest problem the young democracy will have to solve, the one most fraught with perils, on a par or even outranking security and economic independence. For immigration holds the key to the fate of Israel.

Without growing, Israel must always remain a small state in the backwash of all international life. But a growth in population is imperative for a more vital reason: a continual influx of newcomers for many years to come is needed to insure the State an even chance of cultural, economic and military survival in the Middle East.

New blood is needed both physically and spiritually, the former to settle the wastelands, to work the factories and to swell the ranks of the army, the latter to build that cultural, religious and spirit for which the State came into existence. If Israel does not continue to grow, it will not be an island in the midst of a stormy Arab sea—as is often visualized—but an open boat in danger of being swamped in this sea, at the mercy of any high wave. It will determine Israel's status as a small nation, even on the outlook for protectors, alliances and pacts of self-defense, or as a nation capable of taking its rightful place in world affairs.

All this throws into sharp relief the fallacy so common in Israeli thinking that the immigrants need the State more than the State needs them. If the immigrants do not come, perhaps their fate will be sealed if they do not find a safe and congenial foster home, but so would that of the State.

Much of Israel's land is available for agricultural settlement, especially in the Negev and the West Galilee where there are a dearth of settlers. The Negev is predominantly semi-desert, while the West Galilee

is a sparsely-settled Arab stronghold within Israel. Both areas must be turned into rich agricultural land under the hands of skilled, devoted farmers. The North African immigrants, now being settled in two vital areas, at Lachish, southwest of Jerusalem, and at Ta'anach, near ancient Megiddo, are only a minute percentage of what is needed. They are not even filling the two dangerous vacuums mentioned above. But the Lachish and Megiddo areas would remain hunting grounds for raiding infiltrator gangs if not for these immigrants, for all available resources from former waves of immigrants and old-time settlers have already been tapped. Among the latter much suitable material and manpower for settlement still exists, but they are so violently opposed to a rural way of life that it is easier to bring immigrants from North Africa than to convince Israelis to go there.

It is not only a question of settling the land; first and foremost it is a question of raising food. An estimated thirty per cent of the country's food basket is imported. An effective blockade of Israel's coast line would starve the country to death within—estimates vary—but six months is the accepted figure.

Other advantages will accrue to the State from a large farming population, for it could produce more and more of those semi-luxury fruits—King citrus, bananas and various other semi-tropic delicacies—which are in brisk demand in Europe, in both the eastern and western blocs. Israel lies close enough to Europe, but yet far enough to the south—much further in ability to raise fruits in the semi-tropic Jordan Valley than it would seem geographically—to become the main source of such fruit.

Industry cannot be content to supply lo-

cal needs with hopes for progressively larger export markets. The advantages of large industrial plants over small ones are immense. Technology is moving with dizzying rapidness. It is doubtful that a small country, with one tiny industrial plant in any one field, can ever hope to compete with gigantic American, English or French firms producing the same product. For the large countries with one main industry and many branches, with large financial reserves, can quickly adapt themselves to the latest developments without causing any serious dislocations. Not so with a small plant operating on a shoestring which would have to close down to retool, thus suffering financial loss while depriving the local market of its products. Can "cheap" Israel labor compete with highly mechanized plants with fast moving assembly belts, or with automation? All these factors are available only in large industrial plants.

A large internal market, consuming most of the industrial output, would also permit the factory to work at lower prices, and thus export more cheaply its surplus. The country's industrial future will not be dependent on the vagaries of foreign markets, markets which are subject to cycles of fads, customs, protecting baby industries and maintaining its own high standard of living.

There is the cultural factor. A large population can support a host of authors, artists, actors, painters, etc., who are a luxury for a small population. For example, Jerusalem, with a population of 135,000, has no theatre group today (if the two amateur troupes which put on a play once or twice a year are disregarded). But a Jerusalem of 300,000 could not afford to be without a theatre, or a fine concert hall, for it would lose its culture-loving residents to Tel Aviv. The same holds true of the nation as a whole. Talent, which flourished in the Diaspora, is being stifled in Israel due to the lack of a market sufficiently large to pay the price to see its exhibits. This inevitably will lead to a lack of a national culture. Israelis would soon follow the almost world-wide trend of

imitating foreign jazz bands, Hollywood movies, etc., while its own talented youngsters languished at home or worked for foreign markets.

Immigration itself is the foundation for continued immigration. It is a self-generating proposition. The wider, deeper rooted the base of the settled population becomes, the higher the superstructure of newcomers it can support without undue strain. These newcomers, gradually becoming productive, widen this base even further.

The Arab States are fully aware of this, calling it a "vicious circle" which one day must whirl over the borders of Israel to encroach on Arab soil.

And finally, immigration is big business, in all its ramifications, possibly the biggest business in Israel. The abrupt cessation of immigration and its integration would cause disastrous dislocations in Israel's economy. From the moment of his arrival at an assembly point in a foreign port of embarkation—nay, even months, sometimes a year before this—until he is medically examined, classified, clothed, fed, supervised, reaches Israel and becomes a productive factor in the country's economic and cultural life, thousands of hands are stretched out to help him.

Most are stretched out indirectly. The technician in Jerusalem processing drugs, the clothing worker in Ata, the farmer in the Emek raising food, the factory in Haifa turning out cement, the Tel Aviv workshop turning out utility furniture, are playing just as vital a part as that vast army which receives him at the port, sends him to a reception center or directly to his new home and settles him there. If immigration and settlement stop, widespread unemployment would be inevitable.

The constant pressure of new immigrants is the best guarantee that Israel's development work will keep pace with plans and dreams. The newcomers must be settled; the country must be developed to settle them. True, much development work would go on without this pressure, but not at the same pace. Israel today has sufficient persons

who are content to rest on their laurels. Perhaps they deserve it, but their inactivity—for they are veteran leaders—would be infectious.

The military factor is simple arithmetic. A nation of one million can put X divisions in the field; a nation of two million, 2X. The larger the country's population, the greater its military preponderance in sheer weight of numbers and ability to produce munitions.

Even if the supreme test of war is not visualized, the advantages accruing to a heavily-populated Israel still hold true as regards border security from infiltration. The Border Force will not have to grow in numerical strength if the country doubles in population; it can even cut its ranks for a border region dotted with settlements, each of which necessarily must mount its own internal watchmen, is a better guarantee of security than any number of roving patrols.

The Arab states know this. It is constantly taken into account when they organize the gangs of death-dealing infiltrators. The raids are an important factor in making immigrants think twice about coming to Israel. The Arabs exploit this knowledge, for they believe that an Israel swelling under the impact of Jewish immigration must eventually expand its borders. The Arabs are cynical about the value of international guarantees—just as much as Israel is.

An Israel safe to walk the roads at night is twice as attractive to immigrants as one where death and mutilation lurk at every dark patch. Newcomers, especially those raised in the semi-ghetto atmosphere of subservience of North Africa, are not too eager to test their strength with infiltrators. They prefer to settle in the overpopulated cities and leave the sparsely-settled border areas to others. But there are no others.

Returning the Arab refugees to Israel—a persistent demand of the Arab countries—would give the Arab states another military advantage. For Israel would have to fight on two fronts if war broke out: the external front and the internal, fifth column one. The latter would be the most dangerous. Admitting the refugees would not only

change the Jewish-Arab ratio within the State, but it would also deprive Israel of internal growth by Jews. Even if the refugees are not returned to the homes they abandoned, they would have to be settled on the wastelands (bordering on the Arab states) thus depriving the Jews of these areas. These refugees would be an extremely antagonistic element. It would take years and years to "pacify" the hatred bred in their hearts during the past eight years.

When discussing Arab-Israel relations, several fallacies become obvious. The first is that if the refugee problem was solved, by admitting them to Israel or settling them elsewhere, the major detriment to Israel-Arab peace would be removed. Nothing could be further from the truth. The refugees are a result of the enmity between Israel and the Arab states, not a cause of it. Eliminating the refugee problem would only return the wheel to the 1947-48 stage when war was thrust upon Israel.

The second is that the Arab minority in Israel is happy. No minority which seeks either independence or annexation to its racial and cultural stock, is happy. The implicit fact that a group is a minority and desires to retain its cultural and ethnic background shows that it cannot be happy within the framework of another, an overwhelming cultural group. It will be argued, and rightly so, that the Druze in Israel are content. But the Druze have chosen contentment in Israel to persecution in the Arab states. To put it vulgarly, they have chosen the lesser of two evils. They would leap at the offer of independence or a true autonomous state.

Another fallacy is that peace with the Arab states would bring about a drastic reduction in Israel's armed forces. It might reduce those forces actively engaged in guarding the border, it would make sharp inroads in the number of border murders, thefts and pillage, but the army would maintain its strength. For if Israel would increase in size two fold, fourfold, tenfold, it would still be a speck in a gigantic Moslem world. No one would ever entertain the idea of risking the future of the first Jewish State



in 2,000 years by reducing its armed forces to a smartly-dressed, precision marching battalion of parade soldiers.

The Army will remain for a generation at its present strength. It will even grow, but for another reason. It is one of the greatest educational and cultural factors in Israel. It is the melting pot par excellence. Not only because of its various courses in elementary and advanced Hebrew, citizenship, vocational trades, but mainly because it compels close contact between the oriental and western Jew under conditions where a spirit of comradeship must eventually evolve. Contact exists outside the army camps, of course, but it is apt to be based on friction and petty irritations which do not bode well for the future.

And finally, the belief that a lasting peace is inevitable if the Arabs overthrow their present semi-feudal regimes for democratic ones. While this might usher in a brief or long period of prosperity for the entire Middle East, it would certainly lead to a lessening of explosive tensions in a vital area of the world, but if contemporary and past history are any criteria, peace is a very ephemeral matter. Not only for Israel, but for the entire world, what passes for civilized and what does not, does this apply. The "enlightened and civilized" Arab will be not a whit more "enlightened and civilized" than the German.

Immediately after the State was founded in 1948, the tide of mass immigration began as the camps in Europe and the newcomers from the Arab countries flooded the country.

Immigration is again on the upturn today, for its two main causative factors are again in play. The first factor is the deeply ingrained idealistic attraction for Israel, Jerusalem, Zion. For many this is a vague, amorphous, undefined desire, while for others it is clear-cut, sharp with only economic considerations casting the decisive negative vote.

The second factor is persecution—the goading spur. It can run the gauntlet of such slight discomforts as "some of my best friends are Jews" and veiled insults and

gentlemen's agreements, to the terrifying, ungraspable vista of concentration camps, gas chambers and crematoria.

The explosive situation in North Africa is an example. Both the Arabs and French may easily decide to make peace at the expense of North African Jewry. Again, the civilized colonial-minded Frenchman of 1955 is no more civilized than the German.

It will be pointed out (mainly by those in Israel) that they came more in answer to idealism than to escape the lash of persecution. Nonsense. Among the greatest segment of the population, which passes for idealistic, this idealism was awakened and grew in direct proportion to the sting of persecution. An outstanding example: Herzl, founder of Zionism. The various aliyot are here to prove this contention. None will deny that the first settlers, the Bilu, received their initial impetus from the Russian pogroms. Members of the idealistic Second Aliya will deny that persecution drove them, since they could have just as easily joined that great stream of persons flowing to America. A great part of this Second Aliya, however, only made Israel a stopping-off point in its eventual goal of the United States. The North African situation is final proof. Today, with the threat of a disastrous hurricane hanging over Moroccan Jewry, there is a vociferous demand to come to Israel. There was no such demand two years ago, but as the storm winds mounted, the number of those signing for emigration increased proportionally. All those desiring to come will be in Israel within two or three years. Their emigration is expected to be the final wave until persecution breaks out in some country. Jews will continue to come, of course, without such outbreaks, but 5,000 a year is considered an optimistic figure.

Idealism is not enough. No one can deny the great idealism of American Jewry. It has been amply, fruitfully shown in its unending faith in Israel as expressed materially in the political and financial arenas. The flow of money from America, while not the decisive factor in founding the State, has certainly been the dominant one in keeping the

State's head financially above water.

Yet only a minute trickle of Americans (by Americans, I mean those born and bred, not naturalized ones whose former home was Germany, Poland, etc.) have come.

All this shows that idealism operates only with the catalyst of persecution. This would indicate that all the groundwork being done in America in exhorting immigration is idle chatter. Nothing could be further from the truth. The propaganda campaigns are necessary to channel the thoughts and ways of the people to idealism. If persecution should ever break out—and no American Jew will ever contemplate the idea—it will focus all eyes on Israel. But even without persecution, it has great advantages. It will send an ever-increasing number of students, rabbis, teachers, writers, musicians to Israel, as well as tourists and old-age (retired) settlers.

A third factor encouraging immigration is an opportunity to better one's economic conditions. But the years will be many before this attraction—except for starving Orientals—can ever come into play. Attracting Americans by offering them bribes of better living conditions has proved a dismal failure in the past and will prove one in the future. What actually happens is that the money donated by one American is redistributed to another American who tries to settle in Israel. This creates a class of persons resented by others not so fortunate.

There is much talk of attracting Americans and other well-to-do Anglo-Saxons, French, etc., by offering them a life of service, of fulfillment, of ideals, values. American Jewry, so far, except in minor cases, has not been attracted by this. But a religious revival, a re-identification with Israel as a homeland, may change all this. All this holds true for Jewry in the eastern bloc. If the gates there are thrown open, they will come only if life there is intolerable, for it is unlikely that they will find better economic conditions in Israel.

The dangers of too much immigration are as great as those of too little. Up to a certain point—and no one knows where this point is—an overburden of newcomers would

have a salutary effect. It would shake a great part of the settled population out of its lethargy and force them to seek new ways and means of adjusting the economy. But there would be a point where every newcomer would be just another mouth to feed in a ma'bara or transition camp with no clear-cut prospect of ever taking him out and settling him. Without outside help, this point would have been reached long ago. Today, it is incredible to think how Israel, without help from abroad, could absorb one more immigrant. For the country itself is still living on outside help and will do so for many years to come.

If Russia, the eastern European states, were to open their gates—and if the Jews wanted to come—they could flood the State and smash its economy. It is incredible to think of what would happen if this took place. If American Jewry were to come en masse, Israel would collapse and die or turn into one gigantic camp of ravenous dwellers. For where would the money come from to feed them?

Even if the incredible happens, and immigration continues at a steady pace, a fully absorptive pace, and the State continues to grow easily and rapidly, what will the future hold?

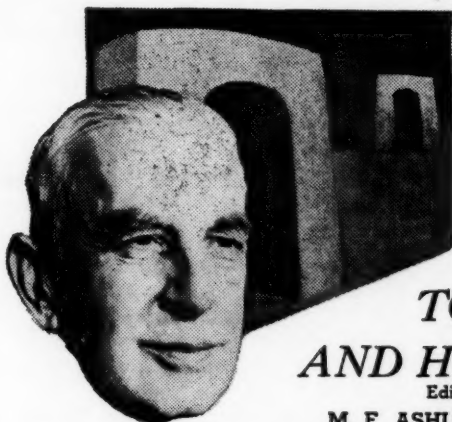
Assuming that in another 20 years all the Jews are settled in Israel, the 12 million of today which will have increased by one-fourth, even one-half. Israel would still be greatly outnumbered by the Arabs.

But it is towards the near future of 2-3 million, not of 10-12 or 15-18 million, which Israel must plan.

Can an Israel of this small size hold its own? Yes. But it must concentrate on building an unbreakable core of a nation, solidly democratic, and highly industrialized, and imbued with a spirit to survive. Israel must strengthen her natural borders, build her economy, and become a small compact nation. Small nations have withstood large ones in the past. Even if they have fallen, they have regained their national independence. Switzerland, Finland, Greece are here to prove it.

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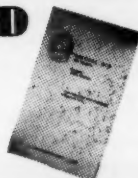
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*Strangers In The Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* by John Higham. Rutgers University Press. 431 pp. \$6.00.

Professor Higham has written an important book. With uncommon originality and vigorous dispassion, this young Rutgers' University scholar's "general history of the anti-foreign spirit" in the United States between 1860 and 1925 elucidates a critical area of the nation's past within the larger framework of American nationalism. Dr. Higham, ever remindful that "a narrative of hatreds" tells little about harmony, presents an inspiring rather than a somber tale. The only general study hitherto available, Gustavus Myers' *History of Bigotry in the United States*, has been, to say the least, inadequate. It is thus fortunate that a scholar of Higham's subtle gifts has assayed the task of illuminating some of the dark spots of our nation's past against a background of light. Bringing a sensitive wide-ranging intellect, keen historical imagination, broad social experience, and a big Christian heart to this task, out of a wilderness of source materials, the author has synthesized a many-faceted tale reaching from the nation's founding to the acceptance of restricted immigration as a permanent feature of American life.

In a volume so generous in scope, the author is careful to point out that his concern is with "the main currents of American nativism" which he equates with "the hostility of American nationalists to European immigrants." Consequently, the complex antagonisms between immigrant groups are but obliquely suggested. The opposition to Chinese and Japanese immigration, the author regards as tangential to his theme; only as Japanese exclusion focused more

general anti-immigration sentiment in the first decade of the present century, does the Japanese question receive extended attention. Furthermore, American foreign policy and its relation to nationalist sentiments, at least in the years before 1914, receives but casual treatment.

Higham sees three standout themes, all ante-dating the Civil War, as main currents in American nativism. The oldest of these, the anti-Catholic tradition, lay embedded in the colonial past, in Europe's religious history, and in the real Politik of competing colonialisms. The second, the anti-radical tradition, became manifest in the 1790's when the French Revolution cast a subversive pall upon immigrants that did not subside until 1800. In the 50's, when immigration reached its pre-Civil War peak, both anti-Catholic and anti-radical traditions crystallized simultaneously. Mounting national disunity aroused a passion for the solidarity of exclusion. For very different reasons in the nation's sections, the masses of non-conforming Germans and Irish Catholics became easy targets. Whereas the anti-Catholic and anti-radical traditions were negative manifestations of American nationalism, asserting what America was not rather than what it was, the third theme, the Anglo-Saxon tradition, defined what America was. Until it was turned to other purposes in the late 19th century, the Anglo-Saxon tradition was without nativist overtones. Indeed, that the United States belonged to the Anglo-Saxon "race" offered an explanation of the nation's greatness. Until it was transmogrified by continental intellectual influences, it was positive and expansive, inclusive rather than exclusive.

With the urban revolution of the late 19th century and the complex problems un-



loosed, some Americans were inclined to find a scapegoat for all the nation's social ills in the immigrants. Foreign, unassimilable, increasingly Catholic and Jewish, inhabiting the slums of the great cities, associated with the labor movement and unwelcome industrial problems, their remoteness made them appear all the more menacing. Especially in times of crisis, in the depression of the 90's, and during World War I and its aftermath, did their presence seem ominous. In the elusive fast-changing decade between 1905 and 1915, when hope and distrust mounted as complex problems did not yield to easy progressive solutions, the newer immigrants began to lose many of their exasperated liberal allies. In these years, as Higham skilfully unravels the tangled main currents of American nativism, we are brought face to face with the prelude mood that would reach its finale in the '20's with the end of the great migration.

In the total perspective of American nativism, until the xenophobic debauch of the post-World War I era, anti-Semitism remained a minor eddy. Then the image of the "International Jew-banker-radical" flickered bright on the national horizon. The Red scare, a still vigorous anti-German sentiment, the delusions of Henry Ford as reflected in the *Dearborn Independent*, the publication of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the somewhat yellowed product of the Tsarist phantasmagoria, and the rise of the Klu Klux Klan, soon to fade into ignominy, testified to the insecurity of a nation in the face of an ever more complicated world. But anti-Semitism, even in these years, subsisted only as part of the greater hysteria that was directed along other lines.

The virtue of Dr. Higham's pragmatic methodology lies in his ability to capture the changing intellectual climates of succeeding decades against a changing social and economic scene. Although clearly the author would grant that certain factors remained unchanged throughout these years, it is clear that the implications of his approach range far beyond the subject matter of this book. This volume, the work of a refined and radical intelligence, will undoubtedly add new stature to the discipline of American intellectual history. The au-

thor's discerning choice of 29 illustrations that closely follow the text, including full-occipital portraits of Henry Cabot Lodge and Madison Grant, blue-blood champions of an Anglo-Saxon America, may even lure the non-intellectuals to exercise their cranial muscles upon the exciting text.

MOSES RISCHIN

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*Her Children Call Her Blessed. A Portrait of the Jewish Mother*, edited by Franz Kobler. Stephen Daye Press. 384 pp. \$5.00.

This beautifully published volume in praise of the Jewish mother offers a great amount of readable and interesting material about the Jewish attitude toward womanhood, but, at the same time, shows that even an intelligent and cultured anthologist may become over-eager about his subject and may sometimes exaggerate the significance of his pet theme.

Franz Kobler, whose two-volume *A Treasury of Jewish Letters* a few years ago was a masterful compilation, continues to give his readers much good and substantive work to enjoy and ponder. He has chosen from the world of fiction, from poets, from Biblical, Talmudic and Midrashic sources, from other areas of Jewish lore, from biographies, from letters and from the drama, from Jewish and non-Jewish writers—and as a result, it is, quite apart from its over-all theme, simply a good book to read. In addition, the editor has written a most illuminating introduction, with some comments on another famous Jewish mother, who is excluded from this volume, Miriam, the mother of Jesus.

Mr. Kobler has special sections on the traditional Jewish mother types—Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel and Leah, Hannah, and many others. There are selections from the writings of Glückell of Hameln and portraits of other Jewish mothers who are remembered only because their children won fame. There are selections here from the letters (Mr. Kobler, a letter expert, leans heavily on this form of expression) of Lucie Dreyfus to her husband Alfred, which have no relation to motherhood, and work about and by Marcel Proust in regard to his mother. There are also stories or chapters about the mothers of Franz Kafka, Chaim Nachman Bialik, Theodore Herzl, Louis D. Brandeis

and other famous men. Much of the works included in these sections by Mr. Kobler make good reading, but they do not add to the portrait of the Jewish mother as such. Proust, for example, was the son of a Catholic father and a Jewish mother who did not become a convert to Catholicism herself. And, of course, she wielded an influence on her son. Whether she symbolizes the Jewish mother is questionable, even if it gives Mr. Kobler an opportunity to have Proust represented in his volume.

There are nice quotations about mothers in general from Edgar Allan Poe, Balzac and other literary immortals. None of them have anything to do with Judaism, but their authors look good in a table of contents. Another flaw is that some of the stories included are inexplicably edited down, for no reason, except perhaps for space; but if that is the case, the irrelevant quotations could easily have remained outside the pages of this book. Although the subject of motherhood can generally be over-sentimental, Mr. Kobler has managed to keep his emotions and the emotions of his writers within bounds, for which he deserved a great deal of credit.

The section on "Mothers in Israel of Our Own Day" comes closest to sentimentality, because the material is in itself so emotional, but the selections, in particular from Rivka Gruber's *The Book of the Two Brothers* will make any reader emotionally upset, and with good and valid reason.

Dr. Kobler believes that one of the greatest contributions to the world of the Jewish faith is its offering of Jewish motherhood as a sacred concept. Yet no matter how wonderfully the Jewish mothers are presented, there is no claim of superiority made about them. Only about the mother of Jesus has this claim been made. Her very canonization, Dr. Kobler states, has separated her from other mothers in Israel. "The very incommensurability with which she has been invested alienates her tragically from the company of her sisters. Every single attribute constituting the Madonna . . . are not only incompatible with the basic ideas of Judaism but also a challenge to the all-embracing sanctity of Jewish motherhood, to the blessedness of the joyful mother of children, to the holiness of every Jewish mother on every Sabbath eve."

And then, with sharp penetration, Mr. Kobler adds: "Even the mournful sight of the Pietà, by its claim to uniqueness, seems to carry an air of pretension when confronted with the countless Jewish mothers who saw their children put cruelly and violently to death for the Sanctification of the Name. 'Every Jew might be the Messiah, every Jewess a mater dolorosa.' Moses Hess, the modern Jewish prophet, has thus restated the undying hope of the Jew for the coming salvation of mankind and his faith in the election of all Mothers of Israel."

Mr. Kobler calls his effort the "first comprehensive attempt to show the supreme and edifying part allotted to the mother and to the idea of motherhood in the world of the Jew." He succeeds in offering much thoughtful and interesting material, but in his attempt to be comprehensive, he includes much that could well have remained where he found it. For what there is that is pertinent to his theme, we are thankful.

HAROLD U. RIBALOW

*Waging Peace*, by C. Maxwell Stanley.  
The Macmillan Company. 256 pp. \$4.50.

The subtitle of this book is *A Businessman Looks at United States Foreign Policy*. Since Stanley is both a businessman and an engineer, one must wonder why he excuses himself for "straying into a field normally reserved to the experts" — as if a businessman-engineer were not entitled to discuss something which only calls for a sound historical background and plain common sense. As to the self-styled experts, what good has their expertness done us so far?

Like an amateur who is not sure of himself, Stanley shields himself behind authorities throughout, from Lincoln to Barney Baruch, and to further disarm his critics, he assures them that he has drawn heavily upon known material already exhaustively developed by others. To climax his modesty — or inferiority complex, if you will, — he might have added that there is not a single new thought in the volume; or if there is, this reviewer has not been able to find it.

The introductory alibis of the author are followed by a preamble of some eighty pages, in which he again stresses his dependency on others. He quotes liberally from their sayings, wise or otherwise, and then

tabulates the many proposals which already have come under consideration, such as use of the U. N., diplomacy, summit talks, peaceful settlement of issues, world community, universal language, betterment in education, health and economic conditions; disarmament, outlawing of weapons, alarm systems, a Federation of a free world and a Superstate.

From these ingredients, the author contends, we must forge the best policy for ourselves. With this argument few will disagree; but how can it be done? Ah! now comes his "new and bold approach!" The reader sits up in attentive expectancy, especially as Stanley seems about to disclose a seven-point program he has evolved, and about which his book is supposed to center. But alas, alas! Instead of coming to the point, the rambling goes on for another hundred pages, and when the final unfolding takes place it proves to be no more than a rehash of measures known to everyone who reads more than the comic section of his paper. Or is there anyone who has not heard discussions at nauseum on "maintaining military strength," "lending a helping hand," etc.?

If I understand Mr. Stanley right, the crux of his program, his "new and bold portion" and his "approach never been applied on the world level," is a greatly strengthened United Nations. "War will be avoided only when law is substituted for anarchy." The watchdog of the law is—surprise!—a strengthened U. N. This, so he proclaims, makes his proposal "bold, imaginative" and realistic. This is a good thought, but it surely is not a very original one.

It may be Mr. Stanley's hard luck that his book was written before the recent events in the Middle East, which supplied the U. N. with its baby teeth. Should its intervention with a police force be successful, the argument for a "greatly strengthened U. N." would find many new adherents in addition to the many who have previously advocated this step.

Those who wish statistical information on past or current proposals to attain universal peace will find it in this volume. Regretfully it must be said, however, that anyone looking for something new is in for a keen disappointment.

OTTO EISENSCHIML

*The Power Elite*, by C. Wright Mills.  
Oxford University Press 1956. 423 pp. \$6.00.

C. Wright Mills, associate professor of sociology at Columbia University, is best known for his penetrating study of the American middle class which under the title *White Collar* sold a, for non-fiction books, record number of 30,000 copies in its first edition. *The Power Elite* is his most ambitious work so far. The seven years which the author spent in preparing this book were indeed well spent. It has been decades since a sociological work of like importance has been published in this country. That such a book which attacks boldly subjects which for so long a time have been taboo in academic writing could be published by as respectable a publishing house as Oxford University Press is just as encouraging as is the fact that its author holds a chair at one of America's leading universities.

This book asks and answers the question: Who is really running this country? One reads this excellently documented volume with growing fascination and an equally growing sense of moral indignation. It is a careful sociological study based on statistical records of several hundreds of the wealthiest families in this country who over the past two generations have attained leading positions in our society. From a wealth of documented material which is nevertheless presented in an extremely readable form emerges the picture of a small, but exceedingly powerful group of leaders in the economic, industrial, military and political field which like an interlocking directorate of a big concern rules through its many facets the United States of the middle Twentieth Century. The titles of the first nine chapters give some idea of the various groupings that are discussed: Local society, The Metropolitan 400, The Celebrities, The Very rich, The Warlords, The Military Ascendancy, and The Political Directorate. The remainder of the book is composed of five chapters of a more analyzing character: The Theory of Balance, The Power Elite, The Mass Society, The Conservative Mood, and The Higher Immorality.

It has long been a favorite belief in this country that we, in contrast to Europe, have

never developed anything like the social phenomenon of an aristocracy with its monopolizing hold on the positions of power in society. Mills' book shows that, while this has been true to some extent it is not true anymore. Our aristocracy, to be sure, is of a much earlier date. It is not based on heredity, at least not until one or two generations ago, it does not sport a centuries' old family tree. But it has become quite as exclusive, and the enormity of the power it wields will come as a shock to many a reader.

Mills writes in the best tradition of American radicalism with the accent on American. He scorns the post-war intellectuals most of whom in his words "have abandoned criticism for the new American celebration." His exposure of the "very rich" has nothing to do with the all-too-usual deprecation of "materialism."

The idea that the millionaire finds nothing but a sad, empty place at the top of society, the idea that the rich do not know what to do with their money, the idea that the successful become filled up with futility, and that those who have been successful are poor and little as well as rich . . . is in the main merely a way by which those who are not rich reconcile themselves to the fact. Wealth in America is directly gratifying and indirectly leads to many further gratifications.

The question this book tries to answer is how this wealth in the hands of a powerful elite is being used to rule the country. Mills' "power elite" is composed of the leaders of corporate industry, the high military brass and a small group of political manipulators on the highest levels of both major parties. Practically all these men are selected from essentially the same small circle of families, their sons marry within that same circle of wealth and influence after having graduated from one of the "Ivy League colleges." Their wealth and their manifold and profitable connections allow them to take part in the "political directorate" in which the leadership of the economic, military and political elite culminates.

One may question some of the author's theories, one may ask whether he does not credit what he calls "the celebrities" with an unduly high power influence, or whether he does not underestimate the role of the financial institutions which he seems to relegate to the mere adjuncts of the indus-

trial corporations. But these are really minor points. The fact remains that here is a brilliant and penetrating analysis of the power structure of present-day America backed by a wealth of factual data that must disturb even the most conservative reader.

Mills has a devastating way of disposing of some of our favorite myths developed by the apologists of the status quo, such as the notion of a "people's capitalism" or the theory that the United States has developed a middle class society in which the very rich and the very poor are gradually disappearing. His description of the growing influence of the high military brass in the top levels of our economy and government is both brilliant and ominous for a country which like ours had developed a healthy traditional mistrust of the military. His description of the Pentagon octopus, its all-pervading power as the country's largest single source of government contracts for private industry, the growing number of retired generals and admirals who have become chairmen of the board of precisely those corporations which depend mostly on Pentagon contracts and his analysis of the increased social status of the military brass in a country which used to consider the military profession as a necessary evil rather than one of the most highly honored in society—all this illuminates the changes in American life with shocking clarity. There is something of a deeply felt moral indignation in the picture of an all-powerful, but essentially irresponsible elite which Mills paints with minute detail and specific documentation. Yet, this is not a "preachy" book. What Mills calls the "higher immorality" of his power elite follows logically from a scientific study of the facts.

It is impossible to do full justice to the richness and fullness of this extraordinary work in the short space available. Suffice it to say that this book should be must-reading for every serious student of our present society.

At one point this reviewer feels he must disagree with the author's attitude rather than with the facts he presents. There is a deep pessimism as to any possibility of democratic action that might change the present trend and forestall an otherwise in-



evitable complete deterioration of America. It does take someone of the insight and courage of C. Wright Mills to put the finger unerringly on the bare facts of the existing power structure on the United States. But it also takes a strong faith in the common sense and decency of our people who, once they are made aware of the dangers inherent in the present development of power distribution, surely will do something about it. This faith is hardly to be found anywhere in Mills' book. But then we should perhaps be grateful for one who has given us such a brilliant analysis of the reality of our society without which any practical approach for the restoration of our democratic way of life would be impossible. The rest is up to us.

MARTIN HALL

*As I See India*, by Robert Trumbull. William Sloane Associates. 256 pp. \$4.00.

Two high caste Brahmins were reading their Bombay newspaper in a recent cartoon. The first, dressed in his high-collared achkan coat and close-fitting churidar breeches was complaining to his friend: "More trouble in Alabama! You'd think those people were being asked to send their children to school with untouchables."

How well this sums up the dilemma of an India inflicted by abhorrence and admiration for the British, Gandhian non-violence and the use of force over Kashmir, Communism at home and abroad, caste and democracy and countless other predicaments. If she has to run before she learns to walk, as Nehru has remarked, then the future will be precarious but eased, happily, by the enthusiasm and zeal of Young India and above all, by the extraordinary and commanding figure of Jawarhalal Nehru.

These are the broad findings of Robert Trumbull after seven and a half years on the sub-continent as the correspondent for the *New York Times*. He was in India during the turbulent years at the close of British rule, the partition between India and Pakistan along religious lines—something Nehru is unalterably opposed to—and the almost unbelievably bloody consequences to eleven million Hindus, Sikhs and Moslems changing sides. One day he climbed aboard a crowded refugee train making the New Delhi-Karachi run, which was soon waylaid

and sacked by raiding Sikhs who promptly slaughtered every last man, woman and child of Islam.

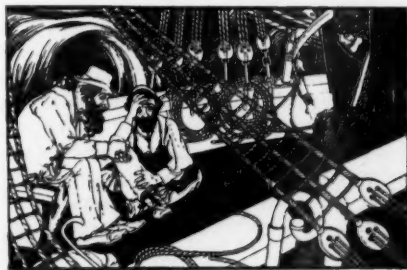
The India Mr. Trumbull saw introduced him to the fakirs and the princes and he was even fortunate in having several private interviews with the prime minister. He writes sympathetically of the conservative, ascetic Gandhi and of Vinoba Bhave, his contemporary disciple who walks about India asking landlords to redistribute their lands to the dispossessed. His portrayals of the millions of aborigines and tribes—the Africans, the criminals, the beggars, the snake charmers and the prostitutes—are all deftly and richly painted. But this isn't only an account of grave problems and solemn solutions. There are several delightful chapters devoted to such astonishing and occasionally ludicrous Maharajahs as the Wali of Swat whose relative, the Akhmud, was celebrated in the distinguished ode:

"Who, or why, or which, or what  
Is the Akhmud of Swat?"

The basic difficulty with these recollections is that far more questions are raised or suggested than answered. Perhaps it is because India is really so puzzling even to those who know her best.

For example, should Lord Mountbatten, the last Viceroy, share some blame for the Partition Riots? Was the creation of Pakistan inevitable? Does Gandhi have any meaning for Official India today? What impact do the "Crazy Mixed-Up Communists"—the author's term—have? And most intriguing of all, after Nehru, not who, as Mr. Trumbull asks, but rather, what? Yet these compunctions aside it all adds up to superbly informed and wholly pleasurable informal reminiscences.

MURRAY POLNER



Storm

E. M. LILIEN

*Judaism Under Freedom*, by Ira Eisenstein. Reconstructionist Press. 262 pp. \$3.50.

The opportunities of American freedom have not always been exploited by the Jew for the purpose of preserving Jewish values and traditions. On the contrary, the unique freedom of America has provided a framework for the diminution of Jewish spiritual and intellectual strength. In order to meet the complex and confusing problems of retaining Jewish identity in a democratic environment, a multiplicity of theological and sociological interpretations have been evolved. Of all these interpretations, Reconstructionism has been the most persistent in viewing Jewish life from its overall perspective and in seeking to find an approach that will preserve the totality of the Jewish experience.

Whether one is a Reconstructionist or not, however, one should welcome any publication from the Reconstructionist Press. Because *Judaism Under Freedom* is for the most part a collection of articles and essays that appeared in print previously, the well-versed reader will discover little that is new. He will, nevertheless, meet a positive Jewish personality whose life has been motivated and enriched by the insights of Reconstructionism.

In this book, Ira Eisenstein discusses the problem of the relationship between Israeli Jewry and American Jewry, the character of life in Israel, the nature of American democracy and some theological matters. However, the major stress of the book is on the American Jewish community. He is critical of the Utopian prognostications of the future of the American Jew. Whereas he admits that some advances have been made, he feels that the realities of Jewish life do not permit unbounded optimism. Few Jews attend the synagogue for spiritual reasons, the standards of Jewish education on the congregational level are lower than on the Talmud Torah level, intermarriage is on the increase, Jewish intellectual and cultural life is stagnating, economic and social pressures must be exerted to raise funds even for the most heart-rending causes, the Jewish community is at once over-organized and disorganized, Zionism as a movement has collapsed, and the long-awaited inspiration from the State of Israel has not manifested itself.

What the American Jew needs, according to Eisenstein, is an integrated Jewish community built on the principles of voluntarism, diversity, and mutual responsibility, and patterned after the *kehillah* of European Jewish life. The *kehillah* would assume responsibility for all of the needs of the Jew, and by virtue of its perspective would be able to emphasize the more normal spiritual and educational needs, rather than the abnormal needs which until now have consumed most of Jewish energies and financial resources.

The *kehillah* idea, however, leaves many questions unanswered. It is no coincidence that the concept of an American *kehillah* evolved in an era when the liberals believed that the solution to the ills of society was a stronger federal government. Many of the aspects of the plan, supposedly patterned after the traditional Jewish community structure, seem to manifest in the modern setting a type of religious socialism. For example, the role of rabbi as community official, responsible to the community at large and not to a specific congregation, parallels the role of the doctor under socialized medicine. Our generation, which has observed socialism's defects and defections and which has developed a skepticism toward large federal bureaucracy, would tend to oppose the *kehillah* because it would, in all likelihood, possess some of the evils and few of the controls of big government.

For these and other reasons, it appears to this reviewer that the *kehillah* program in Jewish life is comparable to the program of the World Federalists on the international scene. Theoretically, many people will agree, but—! Perhaps the best approach is to delineate specific areas of common concern and to commence to work cooperatively in the hope that the Jewish community structure will develop from the bottom up, rather than be imposed from on high without the proper supports.

RICHARD G. HIRSCH

*The Legacy of Holmes and Brandeis, A Study in the Influence of Ideas*, by Samuel J. Konefsky. The Macmillan Company. 307 pp. \$6.00.

The United States Supreme Court has always exerted an irresistible fascination for

students of our American political institutions. Understandably so, for without doubt the Court has occupied a unique position of great influence. Professor Konefsky, who previously had failed to resist this fascination (*Chief Justice Stone and the Supreme Court, The Constitutional World of Mr. Justice Frankfurter*), once more succumbs. In a closely written book he dissects the judicial philosophies of Holmes and Brandeis, attempting to trace their ideas and influence into the present-day Court.

The author has not attempted to write a biography of the two great justices. Rightly so, for it would not be apropos in a volume concerned with "a study in the influence of ideas." Yet, to properly evaluate the meaning of their work (and this book), one must have a working knowledge of the whole man and not merely of the jurist alone. Holmes, in the words of his intimate friend and prolific correspondent, Harold Laski, was "essentially an open-minded conservative with the deep sense of fair play which distinguishes the aristocrat at his best . . . [his] work was epoch-making in American culture because . . . he sought in all his work to see law in the context of a dynamic society."

As to Louis Dembitz Brandeis, some fifteen years after his death, it is becoming increasingly apparent that his stature as a jurist is not dwarfed by that of his more famous contemporary. Usually lacking the Holmesian eloquence, his opinions, nevertheless, reflect a deep-rooted belief in the validity of our democratic institutions. Max Lerner said of Brandeis that "with all his distaste for philosophy he is known as the judge with the most definite and coherent social philosophy. . . . His realistic method of shifting the battle from the barren ground of precedent and logic to the higher ground of social function and social situation must prove an enduring contribution to the process of constitutional interpretation."

For our times, perhaps no part of the Holmes-Brandeis legacy is more significant than the "clear and present danger" doctrine and what Professor Konefsky chooses to call the "self-styled school of judicial self-limitation." While it is true that the doctrine of judicial self-limitation (that the Court will not hold an act of Congress unconstitutional

merely because they disagree with the wisdom of the legislation) comes to mind mainly in the economic sphere, in the last decade the assault on civil liberties has been successful in the main because the Supreme Court has abrogated its responsibilities, retreating behind the shield of the self-limitation doctrine.

Nowhere is this more clearly demonstrated than in the shambles made of the "clear and present danger" doctrine (and the First Amendment!) by the Vinson Court in the trial of the Communist Party leaders in the Dennis case. Konefsky's analysis of the majority and minority opinions is excellent. He correctly points out that Chief Justice Vinson deprived the doctrine of much of its original vitality and significance.

One could wish, however, that he were not quite so solicitous of the rationale expressed in the concurring opinion of Justice Frankfurter. Konefsky makes the perceptive comment that "neither Holmes nor Brandeis made a fetish of his customary deference to the will of the community's policy-makers"; yet he fails to recognize that to Justice Frankfurter, the legislative verdict is sacrosanct, the Bill of Rights to the contrary notwithstanding.

One comes away from this book aware of the legacy, but with the author, not quite sure of the legatees. Would Holmes and Brandeis have stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Justices Black and Douglas, the "libertarian judicial activists," as Justice Jackson disparagingly referred to them, or would they have sanctioned the decisions of the Vinson Court and the consequent erosion of our Bill of Rights? Would they have nodded in approval or condemned Justice Warren's attempts to fashion a new majority for civil liberties in the present Court?

No one familiar with the judicial philosophy of Holmes or Brandeis would be in doubt. True, they refused to sanction the principle that the Supreme Court could ride rough-shod over the legislative will. But the justices recognized that the First Amendment is the cornerstone upon which our free society rests. It is highly improbable that they would have surrendered the Bill of Rights to an omniscient legislature.

LEONARD L. LEON

Slavery, by Hans Engen. United Nations — Economic and Social Council. 42 pp. Free, upon request.

Hundred years after abolition of slavery we are trying to live up to the recent Supreme Court reversal of the "separate but equal" doctrine. At the same time some 30,000 Africans are being enslaved each year and sold for service in villages of the Arabian peninsula. Much of the cash paid for these slaves no doubt stems from royalties paid by American oil companies. Under these circumstances it is not surprising to note that opponents of California's Proposition 4—a perfectly sensible oil conservation bill—maintain that the bill's requirements would increase cost of domestic oil drilling. This in turn would encourage import of cheaper foreign oil. From this follows that a No vote against proposition 4 is a vote against human slavery! In the sense that no slave labor is being used directly by American oil companies the slavery argument forwarded by the opponents of Proposition 4 are, of course, guilty of outrageous demagoguery. Yet, upon reflection, their nonsense is not so nonsensical after all. Here is why.

Mr. Engen was commissioned to do a world-wide survey about slavery. The information so gathered was to be used by the UN in designing a new international convention against "slavery, the slave trade and institutions and practices similar to slavery." Mr. Engen did a good job, considering that the "guilty" nations (particularly Saudi Arabia) refused to cooperate.

The UN called a conference on the proposed convention. In September 1956 representatives of 51 nations gathered in Geneva. Political passions were injected immediately into what should have been a purely humanitarian affair. Article 3, proposed by England and France, caused the greatest controversy. Under the provisions of this clause carrying of slaves by sea would be made liable to the same severe penalties as piracy. It would allow warships and aircraft to search and seize vessels suspected of carrying slaves.

Mr. Engen's survey clearly indicated that Saudi would be most affected by the article, because she is actively and openly implicated in slave trade. But the ships that carry

groups of Africans who are eventually destined to be sold into slavery in Mecca, are ostensibly pilgrim ships. Their passengers, believing themselves to be on pilgrimage, would give small thanks to would-be deliverers who, so far as they knew, were merely trying to prevent them from fulfilling a life-long ambition.

A Lebanese representative was Saudi Arabia's observer at Geneva. He objected to servants being called slaves. After all, "they have a good life." They call their master "Uncle." To subject slave ships to seizure is "an imperialistic device"—a typical trick of Western colonialism. The misuse of "imperialism" and "colonialism" promptly lined African and Asian nations (and Russia, of course) along side Saudi Arabia.

The U. S. did neither participate in the debate nor vote on the issue. The State Department's excuse was that "our present Administration feels it cannot sign treaties affecting internal problems"—an alleged concession to Senator Bricker's repeated assaults on the President's treaty making power. The more likely reason, explicitly stated in the September 10, 1956 issue of *Time*, "is that the U. S. did not wish to offend King Saud and thereby endanger . . . Aramco's valuable oil interests . . ."

Mr. Engen has presented the facts about slavery. That knowledge has to be spread and interpreted within its proper moral setting. It does not make sense to fight for integration at home while condoning slavery abroad. Oil is valuable all right, but it does not justify such a wholesale surrender of moral principles. A nation that lets its basic principles drop into a puddle of oil cannot convincingly claim the role of leadership in the Free World.

FRANK MEISSNER

*The Radical Novel in the United States, 1900-1954: Some Interrelations of Literature and Society*, by Walter B. Rideout. Harvard University Press. 339 pp. \$6.00.

The radical novel is more than a novelty in American literary history; its development is the core around which our fiction has evolved. Moreover, radicalism is one of the liveliest subjects for our writers, equalled only by war in providing a point of contact between art and actuality. Unfortunately,



Dr. Rideout treats none of this; he is a representative of the "list, summarize, and classify" old guard in literary study, and although his summaries show interesting insights, particularly in the latter part of the work, as a whole it is one of the duller books of the year.

The subtitle, "Some Interrelations of Literature and Society," is a quite accurate indication of what is of worth in the book. We have here a series of notes for a history of radicalism in twentieth century America, as reflected in fiction. The socialist-anarchist pre-war era is represented by novels that cry "Shame!" Upton Sinclair, Jack London, James Oppenheim, and Abraham Cahan mark the variations on this age of the muckrakers, the I.W.W., Debs socialism, and *How the Other Half Lives*. The Twenties, an era much under-rated by Rideout, was really a time when humanitarianism and Marxism were sorted apart. Almost every important novel of that time was influenced by radicalism, and yet, so limited is his definition, Rideout can find only ten that he can list as "radical novels," and not one of those is read today.

It is in the chapters on the 1930's that *The Radical Novel* best lives up to its author's intention. Not contented merely to document the influence of Marxism on the intellectual and artistic leaders of the country, he traces the unlikely alliance between followers of the great tradition and Communists, step by step, and clearly substantiates the reason for each development. The impact of the great depression on capitalism, and the apparent immunity of the Soviet Union to boom and bust, he points out, led dissatisfied Americans to look into Marxism. "Statistics comprehensible even to a literary man seemed to be confirming Lincoln Steffens's famous pronouncement that he had seen the future and that it worked. Quite as palpably the American present did not."

In very agreeable contrast to some writers who are better able to integrate life and society in their writing, and would have written better books than this, were they more conscientious scholars, Rideout has studied and analyzed every one of the novels he calls "radical," and in addition has traced

out the influence and history of each of the important Marxist magazines. Pains of this sort do a real and unusual justice to novelists like Waldo Frank, who are too often assigned to obscurity nowadays on the basis of party-line literary criticism that was as unfair in praising the wrong things when the novelists were persona grata with the Comrades as it was in snarling and sneering after they had stopped cooperating.

"The Long Retreat," the chapter on radicalism in the postwar novel, contains what I feel are the best comments on individual works and writers. The discussions of Norman Mailer, Ira Wolfert, and Willard Motley are first class, and the long critical essay that assays the entire career of Howard Fast demonstrates the greatest strength of impartial literary scholarship. In this day when Fast's very name arouses blind fury (except in the Communist papers, which adulate him without doing him the courtesy of understanding him), this picture of a talented writer being driven by ideology and rejection to more "skillfully done but essentially sterile melodrama of history," shows remarkable honesty. Rideout's conclusion, "Then his best work will lie irrevocably behind him, at the beginning of the forties, and a distinct, if limited, talent will be quite lost to American letters," is the highest type of creative literary criticism.

The faults of this book are many, but they all resolve into one: it is a small-scale treatment of a large-scale subject. The conventions of fiction have not been the same since Freudian psychology, social consciousness, and dialectical materialism first hit them; all our fiction since Henry James has been radical—all of it that counts, at any rate—*Life* magazine notwithstanding. Dr. Rideout has been conscientious in treating fiction of radical collectivism—and he gained much skill in the craft of the critic as he went along—but he simply did not master the ambivalence toward collectivism and individualism that was the mark of the radical before 1930. He has, however, the ideal attribute for mastering it, an open mind. His next book should be worth looking forward to.

WILLIAM BITTNER

*The Doukhobors of British Columbia*, edited by Harry B. Hawthorn. The University of British Columbia and J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd. 288 pp. \$5.50

Doukhobortsy is Russian for spirit wrestlers, but to the outside world the Doukhobors of the Canadian province of British Columbia are better known as arsonists and nudists than as wrestlers with the spirit.

The Doukhobors started to come to this hemisphere as religious refugees some fifty years ago. Influenced by the teachings of Tolstoy, their creed denies the legitimacy of worldly government, and the military and educational functions of the state are held to be especially odious. In Canada, they have been absolute and militant pacifists; they have refused to send their children to school; they do not register for the draft; frequently they refuse to pay taxes. And as one might expect, the government got in the way of their practices. True, they were not dealt with as cruelly in Canada as they had been under the Czars in Russia; but the red-tape requirements of a democracy were almost as difficult to bear for people who wanted so desperately to be left in peace.

As a result of the many frustrations arising from the incongruity of an other-worldly group existing in a very this-worldly environment, an intransigent sub-group developed among them which calls itself the Sons of Freedom. It is this section of the Doukhobor community that engages in such demonstrations as the burning of houses (mostly their own) and nudist parades. These are gestures of defiance; to outsiders they seem senseless and futile (what can be gained by burning one's own house?) but to the Doukhobors they are a way of coming to grasp with a spiritual reality that transcends the selfish considerations of this-worldly pursuits.

For many decades, the Canadian authorities have dealt with such behavior in a way in which one would expect any government to deal with "religious fanatics": the Doukhobors were sent to prison by the hundreds. But a few years ago the provincial government of British Columbia decided that a more enlightened procedure was called for, and a group of social scientists was appointed to study the "Doukhobor problem" and to

present its recommendations. The present book is a somewhat abbreviated version of their report and consists of chapters written by seven different scholars in the various fields of social science.

The notion that scholars should study a social problem is quite an advance over the more usual practice of letting debating politicians have the only say, and it takes quite a bit of imagination to introduce the procedures of objective scholarship into an area that is so heavily laden with emotion as is heterodox religious activity. I have been informed by one of the members of the committee that the new ("Social Credit") government which took office in the province some time after the report was presented has largely scrapped the committee's recommendations. But from a long-term view, this is not as bad a defeat as one would think; the fact that the committee was appointed to begin with, was able to complete its work and to publish its report—these surely constitute a victory for reason that cannot easily be undone.

But much as we must applaud the entry of reason into the realm of social action, there are certain limitations inherent in this procedure when it is applied to as other-worldly a sect as the Doukhobors. The committee, to be sure, did a workmanlike job of social analysis; especially illuminating, I believe is the chapter written by the group's psychiatrist, Dr. Alfred Shulman of Baltimore's Seton Institute. And even when another committee member went into details about the necessity of erecting special panel barracks for possible future offending Sons of Freedom, one has the feeling that this is part of a rational and humane approach to the overall problem.

Despite these highly interesting chapters, however, despite the evident good-will on the part of both governmental sponsors and committee members, despite the fact that this book is for many reasons among the most fascinating I have read in years—despite it all, there remains a fundamental doubt regarding the whole procedure.

The social scientists engaged in this undertaking worked with the implicit assumption that people are ultimately moved by self-interest, and that difficulties in human relations can usually be straightened out by demonstrating to the contending parties that

mutual cooperation is more beneficial to all concerned than hostility and strife. This, as I read these reports, is the meaning behind the committee's recommendations for an adjustment of the Doukhobors to Canadian life and to rational pursuits in general. The committee sincerely wishes the welfare of the Doukhobors—nobody can doubt that; but it has a concept of welfare that was shaped by western ideas of reasonableness, rationality, and self-interest. These ideas are alien to the Doukhobors.

When we are confronted with a group as apparently irrational as the Sons of Freedom, it seems indeed natural for us to speak in terms of maladjustment and even to mention the unconscious aggressive meanings inherent in burning one's own house and in depriving oneself of earthly possessions. These explanations are interesting and valid to a certain point; but they seem more like descriptions of peripheral factors than explanations of the central ones. For the truth is that if the Doukhobors had wanted to become assimilated to the this-worldly culture of western society, they probably could have achieved this as easily as the Anabaptists and Baptists and Quakers have done before them. But unlike these Reformation-derived sects, the essentially mystical Doukhobors chose the poverty and misery of despised heretics, losing everything, thereby, except dignity and honesty and truth as they see it.

The question that arises now, is whether we can exhaustively explain such religious phenomena in terms of social and emotional maladjustments. If we can—and the committee implicitly assumes that this is possible—the Doukhobor problem indeed might be solved through sociological and psychological understanding. But the tenacity with which the Sons of Freedom hold onto their very radical way of life—and we must remember that while Doukhoborism is inherited, adherence to the Sons of Freedom is largely a matter of individual choice—this intransigence seems to confirm what Max Weber taught us a long time ago: fundamental choices in values are resistant to scientific analysis. We are left, I think, with the lesson that only a sympathetic spiritual leap into the world of the Doukhobors can furnish us with anything approaching true understanding.

These reservations, of course, in no way detract from the fundamental importance of the book, and it is to be hoped that it achieves the wide distribution it deserves.

WERNER COHN

*Inky Darkling*, by Louis Grudin. The Dial Press, 238 pp. \$3.50.

One will have to go far to come upon a book such as the one under review. It is a curious concoction of sensitive and incisive writing, unmitigated trivia, coy verbal capers, and an uninhibited stream-of-consciousness confessional. To read it is to be tantalized by the author's obvious literary ability and irritated by his deliberate, almost masochistically vapid wordplay.

The author intimates, playfully yet with obvious pique, that he is a poet and philosopher who has seldom received his due, that his friends have never appreciated him, and that he has been pushed around and beaten down by a crass business world. In writing of his experiences he occasionally waxes savage in his sarcastic thrusts at his associates. Some of the passages are lyrically poignant. They create the image of a talented man at odds with society, scorned and cheated and ignored by his inferiors; a poet who tries hard and suffers deeply in his efforts at earning a living in an advertising agency. "And suppose you keep getting it and taking it, well, that's experience, ain't it?" In this sense the book is a cathartic confessional—delineating the author's dreams and defeats, the greedy ulcer-ridden hucksters about him, and the topsy-turvy society in which he lives.

Some of the most lyrical pages of the book deal with the author's mountain retreat in Connecticut. There, far from the madding crowd, he busies himself with homely chores, breathes deeply of the healing serenity of nature, and experiences the sense of dignity and wholeness associated with the life away from the crass marketplace.

The author is not content, however, with a straightforward narrative. Acutely conscious of his unmerited minor position in the world of letters, eager at once to express his resentment and to demonstrate his originality and worth as a writer, he decided to plead his case with the wit and wistfulness of the literary Harlequin. The book abounds with combinations and associations of pho-

netic sounds and syllables, phrases and expressions—all juggled clownishly in a manner to reveal the author's inner worth. Some of the verbal contortions possess a child's joyous unintelligibility or have meaning to those who know Yiddish; others are either banal smirks at his own presumed frailty or savage slings at an inimical society. The sum of this verbal mishmash and impish clowning is a piercing cry of the hurt poet yearning for the balm of recognition and squirming under the indifference of his peers. It must have cost him dear to write of himself:

As you see him in his mere shadow, a Peter Schlemiehl, a yankel of a yokel of a yankyman junkman. He dealt in scraps and cast-me-downs, off an on; and thought every bit of precious offal a gem of purest hoorah and eureka hooray; and he invented everything all over again, and discovered America. . . . It's hard to say, but he had something; and you never can tell, it could be it might come out some day one way or another, if it figured and it came out right side up.

Louis Grudin certainly has "something," as he had demonstrated in his previous writings. *Inky Darkling*, however, will not greatly enhance his stature as a man of letters.

CHARLES A. MADISON

*Germany's Eastern Neighbors*, by Elizabeth Wiskemann. Issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. London-Oxford University Press. 309 pp. 30 shillings.

Western governments have adopted an ambiguous attitude towards the problem of Germany's eastern frontiers. They accept the new settlement, especially the Oder-Neisse border with Poland, as a *fait accompli*. Yet they maintain that the legal determination must await the peace treaty with Germany, for which there is no hope now that more than eleven years have passed since the end of the war. Possession is 99 per cent of the law in international politics and Poland, which occupies the disputed territory, has already assimilated it economically, politically, and ethnically. It is difficult to see how the Western powers can maintain seriously that the present arrangement of the Oder-Neisse territories is reversible.

The victims of the fiction that the lost areas will one day be regained are the German refugees, who keep hoping that they will some day return to their former homes. No political leader in West Germany,

whether a socialist or Christian democrat, dares to tell the truth for fear of losing votes on the election day. The crime of Mrs. Wiskemann's book in West German eyes is that it dares to tell the truth and, on top of it, shows that the territorial changes are justified.

Mrs. Wiskemann argues that the Oder-Neisse line provides the shortest frontier between Germany and Poland, eliminating the German encirclement of Czechoslovakia. Moreover, Poland is a very poor country but it can achieve prosperity with the help of the Silesian mineral wealth. It is not in Germany's interest to have a poor Poland as her neighbor. Even the forced repatriation of German minorities from Poland, Czechoslovakia and other eastern countries was a blessing in disguise for West Germany because, as the author explains it, "without millions of Germans from the east . . . there would never have been enough labor to restore the former prosperity . . . of the Federal Republic." It is true that German migrants suffered much hardship and many casualties when they were uprooted, but historical justice requires that this should be put side by side with the losses suffered by Poles and Czechs at German hands. Mrs. Wiskemann points out that "the expulsion of the Germans by the Poles cost something well under one million German lives: on the other hand the war brought about by the German attack upon Poland is usually reckoned to have cost at least 6 million Polish lives, nearly a quarter of the Polish nation, itself less than a third of the German nation (including Austria)."

Nor does the author fail to point out the inconsistency of the present West German policy about the lost territories. The Ministry of Refugees is striving to achieve a rapid integration of refugees into the economic and social life of West Germany, which makes it unnecessary for them to return to their homeland. Yet the West German government is committed to return the refugees to their former homes. The refugees themselves want to retain what they have gained in West Germany and to recover what they have lost in the east.

The false hopes of the German people with regard to their eastern frontier are kept alive by the Western powers. This creates



the danger of a future German aggression. Although the present West German government has repudiated the use of force, the governments that succeed it will not necessarily follow a policy of restraint. It is a merit of this book to point out the danger in clear terms. That it is necessary to take its warning seriously is proved by the flutter of anger which it has aroused in official German circles.

SURINDAR SURI

*Compulsion*, by Meyer Levin. Simon and Schuster. 495 pp. \$5.00.

Thirty-three years ago two young men, eighteen and nineteen years of age and children of wealthy parents in Chicago, murdered a thirteen-year-old boy. The common reference to the murder is to this day the "Loeb-Leopold case." Only Nathan Leopold, who has been in the Joliet Penitentiary now for more than three decades, is an infrequently-heard-from voice of the past. His companion in the atrocity, Richard Loeb, was killed by a fellow-convict in 1935, eleven years after his imprisonment.

Now comes Meyer Levin, already widely known in Chicago for his famous novels, *The Old Bunch*, *Citizens*, and other works, to retell the "Loeb-Leopold case" and explain in almost scientific terms the "compulsion" processes and "motiveless" actions of the convicted boys in perpetrating the crime.

Judd Steiner (Nathan Leopold) and Arthur Straus (Richard Loeb) had been steady and intimate friends for several years. Neither, according to the author, received more than the nominal parental care accorded to children of the rich surrounded by governesses, private tutors, chauffeurs, etc. Each had grown to be self-contained and to pursue a life according to the dictates and whims of his own nature. Both were precocious students. From the earliest days of their so-called maturity, they had learned to distrust their fellow-students and family. An accidentally observed scene disclosed to a witness, and through him to others, the fact that they were homosexuals of long and persistent practice.

Judd Steiner, a voracious reader, regarded himself a disciple of the German philosopher Nietzsche and as a budding superman whose intellect rejected the accepted and

conventional behavior and for whom concepts of right and wrong were nonexistent. His rationalization of history was glib, superficial, and brilliant. In its totality it was a defense of the premise that the end justifies the means.

Arthur Straus, ostensibly a fine specimen of manhood, developed into a braggart, petty thief and prevaricator who, because of parental indulgence was able to gratify costly whims, cultivated an intimate alliance with Judd Steiner. The two, in the course of their association, conspired to satisfy a yearning to execute a "perfect crime." Their prior offenses—thievery and arson had gone undetected and unpunished. In their long and studied preparation for the crime there was never an awakening of a feeling of pity for their unknown victim. It was to be a kidnapping. Their choice of the thirteen-year-old Paul Kessler (Bobbi Franks) was accidental. The child simply happened along when they were on the prowl for a victim. Inveigled into their death car, he was immediately killed by Arthur Straus and his body disposed of on the outskirts of the city. Ransom notes were dispatched to Kessler's father, but before the frantic parents could pay the ten-thousand-dollar ransom demanded of them, the child's corpse was found and identified.

In the ghastly process of doing away with the body of the boy, Judd Steiner lost his eyeglasses. The author, then a cub reporter on a local newspaper, and a fellow university student of Steiner and Straus, though ignorant of the identity of the murderers, furnished the police with important clues. The two murderers were eventually apprehended. It should be noted that, aside from the value of *Compulsion* as a profound narrative of psychological significance, this book was listed by the New York Times as "also, a detective story, superb both in quality as fiction and fidelity to fact."

Transcending these and other aspects of this novel is the author's meticulous research into the mentality, background, environment, and intellectual processes that evoked the monstrous act. This he achieved through an examination of fellow students and relentless investigations into the lives of Steiner and Straus from their very infancy. Much of this, of course, emerged from the

testimony of the alienists employed by the defense to find data that would make for "mitigating circumstances" in the trial of the culprits for their lives. The insistence by the prosecution that the young defendants knew right from wrong and that precedent dictated a verdict of guilty fell flat as against a masterfully advanced plea by the defense that the minds of their clients were "diseased" and immature, and that they were wholly incapable of rationalizing the consequences of overt acts. The court in a lengthy opinion accepted the contention of the defense about the "mitigating circumstances," but imposed upon the defendants a life sentence in prison on the ground that they were minors.

In the moving narrative of Meyer Levin the lawyer for the defense, Jonathan Wilk (Clarence Darrow) emerged more than merely a zealous advocate for lenience. His speech before the court, in which he sought to place at least a part of the blame upon the innate inadequacies of human nature, upon the helplessness of society to cope with the derelictions and ill-defined standards of normal human behavior, and the acknowledged limitations of psychiatric knowledge, stamped the lawyer as a man of immeasurable stature. Jonathan Wilk articulated for the public the utter bankruptcy of accepted dogmatic regard for the acts of the hopelessly confused youth of the nation. He condemned Steiner's and Straus's act but, in effect, he insisted that charges should be levelled against factors beyond the immediate capacity of society to change or eradicate.

If I should succeed in saving these boy's lives and do nothing for the process of the law, I should feel sad indeed. If I can succeed, my greatest reward and my greatest hope will be that I have done something for the tens of thousands of other boys, for the countless unfortunates who must tread the same road in blind childhood that these poor boys have trod—that I have done something to help human understanding, to temper justice with mercy, to overcome hate with love.

He succeeded.

*Compulsion* is a major contribution to belles-lettres. It is important both as a thrilling story and as a penetrating analysis of human nature at its worst and at its finest.

BENJAMIN WEINTROUB

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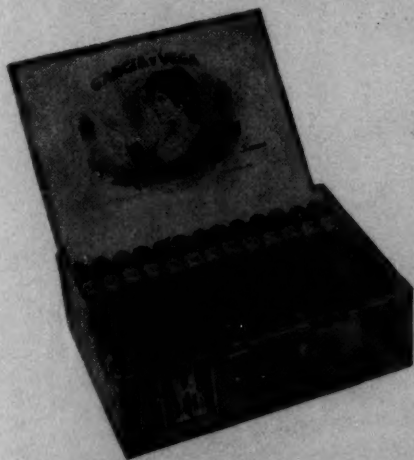
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